Daily Report

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Cuba

Gorbachev's Visit Indicates 'Growing Ties'

FL0612212888 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2047 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] The Soviet leader's tour, which begins today, to the United Nations Headquarters, Cuba, and England, is interpreted by Moscow as the final part of a 12-month active foreign policy, characterized by its universality.

According to political observers in Moscow, Gorbachev's meeting with our Commander in Chief Fidel Castro is the reaffirmation of mutual respect for the characteristics of each process of socialist construction.

Gorbachev's first trip to Latin America is also the culmination of growing ties with the region. This was demonstrated, among other ways, in this year's meeting with Brazilian President Jose Sarney.

On his visit to the United Nations Gorbachev will reaffirm the decision to continue negotiations with the United States, while his stop in London is seen as a meaningful step in Soviet foreign policy.

Castro on Progress in Las Tunas Province

FL0212234588 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 29 Nov 88

[Excerpts] Shortly before inaugurating the 200 T Rolling Mill, the commander in chief granted an interview to Naranjo Rosabal, our correspondent in Las Tunas.

[Begin recording] [Rosabal] Greetings. Our Commander in Chief Fidel Castro Ruz went on an extensive tour through the Covarrubias Beach as part of his visit to Las Tunas Province. In Covarrubias, the commander in chief talked to the workers building there and showed interest in their living conditions and the work they carry out.

[passage omitted]

[Rosabal] Excuse me, Commander, excuse me for just a minute. We would like to...

[Castro, interrupting] Which station?

[Rosabal] Cuban television. Close to here, when you inaugurated Puerto Carupano 10 years ago, you challenged the people of Las Tunas not to stay behind. What is your impression after a decade?

[Castro] Well, I believe... [changes thought] As a matter of fact, I was reading in the helicopter a report on the economic and social development of Las Tunas. There is no doubt that it has made considerable progress. Its industrial and agricultural production and construction are growing. Even this year, with all the difficulties we have had, production in Las Tunas Province grew by over five percent.

[Rosabal] Speaking of construction, the people of Las Tunas have been capable of working in their own province and have helped other provinces.

[Castro] Yes, they have been capable of that. I was also seeing that they have increased sand, gravel, block, and brick production by over 50 percent. In sum, all kinds of construction material. They have completed, they have built some sand washers, some new mills. They are developing ceramics. They are developing sugarcane by-products with a series of large productions. They are increasing the production of tubers and vegetables. They have ambitious plans for the future. They have developed ceramics. They already have a number of ceramics factories. They are producing [word indistinct] ceramics for insulators and other uses.

In the social area, they are making much progress. They have made notable progress in education. They already have a little over 96 percent of school retention. They have dual sessions in six or seven municipalities; 100 percent of the city people attend the dual session. They have improved considerably in education. I believe that their infant mortality rate was around 26 or 27 [units not specified] in 1977. They have reduced it by around 15. It is still a little high and they have to reduce it even more.

They already have over 100 family doctors. They have over 700 doctors in the entire province. They had around 200, 200 some doctors 10 years ago. I don't even want to think of how many they had before the revolution. According to statistics, there were very few. So, in the area of health they have a number of hospitals, polyclinics, and a good number of dentists. Health has improved considerably.

We are also improving recreational activities and sports. Now they have the stadium, not a stadium... [corrects himself] the multiple-use room, as they call it. They are building a pasteurization plant with a capacity of 100 liters of milk and some tens of thousands of containers of yogurt. They are working on a development program for milk production. We are going to start a construction project of many tens of dairies. We are going to start the construction project in January or February. It is similar to the one we are building in Camaguey although it is a little smaller. We are also going to build it in Las Tunas and in Ciego de Avila. Therefore, there is practically not a single field in which progress has not been made here. [end recording]

Soviet Communications Cooperation Praised

FL0312192788 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 1 Dec 88

[Text] Reynaldo Montero, vice minister of technical applications of the Cuban Communications Ministry, has told the national and foreign press that Soviet

cooperation in the field of communications began with the triumph of the revolution. Montero also said that the press room has been set up to cover Gorbachev's visit to Cuba.

[Begin Montero recording] We can say, without a doubt, that the progress achieved in communications in Cuba during the 30 years of the revolution would not have been possible without the valuable assistance of socialist countries in general and, in particular, the assistance of the Soviet Union. It was initially demonstrated in the consolidation, the creation of a firm basis for our international radio communications. [end recording]

The Soviet Union first provided the technical and human resources to assemble two transmission centers, one in Bauta and the other in Bejucal, as well as a receiver in Cuatro Caminos, all of which are in Havana. This equipment has made it possible for Radio Havana Cuba to reach every corner of the world.

Reynaldo Montero stressed that the Caribe Land Station is also a product of this cooperation. It is the first station in the Intersputnik system to be built outside Soviet territory.

Egyptian Minister Arrives on Official Visit

FL0312132088 Havana Radio Progreso Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 3 Dec 88

[Text] Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs, arrived late yesterday in Havana on an official visit.

During his stay here Ghali will hold talks with his Cuban counterpart, Isidoro Malmierca. He will be received at the National Assembly of the People's Government and he will also visit some places of interest.

Bilateral Talks Begin

FL0312194488 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1908 GMT 3 Dec 88

[Text] Bilateral talks between Cuba and the Arab Republic of Egypt began this morning in the Foreign Ministry in Havana.

Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs, is on an official visit to Cuba.

The Cuban delegation to the talks is headed by Foreign Minister Isidoro Malmierca; Ghali heads the Egyptian delegation, which arrived yesterday.

In addition to bilateral affairs, the situations in Central America, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America were discussed during the talks.

The Egyptian delegation also includes (Muhammad Abomba), Egyptian ambassador to Cuba, and Ma'mun Murtada, chief of the cabinet of the State Ministry in Cairo.

Castro Greets Albania's Alia on National Day

AU0612151088 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 30 Nov 88 p 4

[Telegram from Fidel Castro Ruz, president of the Council of State and of the Government of the Republic of Cuba, to Ramiz Alia, chairman of the Presidium of the People's Assembly of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, and Adil Carcani, chairman of the Council of Ministers]

[Text] On the occasion of the 44th anniversary of the liberation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, in the name of the people, the Council of State, and the Government of the Republic of Cuba, I send you our most sincere good wishes.

This is a good opportunity to point out the progress that has been made in the development of our bilateral relations and to reemphasize our readiness to continue and deepen them.

Vice Foreign Minister Ends Philippines' Visit

FL0312155388 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1212 GMT 3 Dec 88

[Report by Alberto de Perez]

[Text] I have a report here from the Spanish press agency, EFE, from Manila, which says that Vice Foreign Minister Giraldo Mazola this morning concluded an official 5-day visit to the Philippines. The purpose of the trip was to strengthen bilateral relations.

Mazola has traveled to Indonesia on an official visit and he will later travel to Malaysia, where he will conclude his tour of Southeast Asia.

During his stay in Manila, the Cuban diplomat held talks with Philippine Foreign Minister Raul Manglapus and Senate President Jovito Salonga. He also met with Leticia Ramos, head of the Philippine's Foreign Relations Committee, and other authorities in the fields of education, trade, and science.

Mazola described the trip to the Philippines as one of goodwill and he said that one of the goals of the trip is bilateral rapprochement in the economic and scientific-technological areas. At the same time, Mazola acknowledged the range of possibilities for cooperation between Manila and Havana in the areas of genetic engineering and biotechnology, as well as rice research.

Raul Castro Presides Over Promotion Ceremony

FL0312153588 Havana Tele-Rebelde Network in Spanish 1400 GMT 3 Dec 88

[Text] Army General Raul Castro Ruz, second secretary of the PCC Central Committee and FAR minister, has presided over the solemn ceremony promoting to the

grade of [words indistinct] FAR chiefs and officials. The event took place at the FAR Universal Hall and was attended by FAR generals and officials. [Words indistinct] guests.

At the ceremony, Division General Carlos Fernandez said that the grades conferred on those officials represent the high estimation that our people, party, and FAR chiefs place on their work and the country's defensive capabilities.

Panamanian Party Leader on 1989 Elections

PA3011220888 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 30 Nov 88

[Interview with Luis Gaspar "Toty" Suarez, president of the Revolutionary Panamenist Party (PPR), by Ezequiel Perez Martinez; in studio; date not given—live or recorded]

[Text] [Perez] Today, we are pleased to talk with Luis Gaspar "Toty" Suarez, candidate in the presidential elections scheduled to be held next year in the sister Republic of Panama. We would like you to give us your views about these presidential elections slated for next May. How could they counter the U.S. pressure against your people?

[Suarez] All good Panamanians—that is, those of us who are not submissive to the United States—want those elections. We will participate in the elections, and we know once these elections are held on 7 May 1989, the United States will no longer have an excuse to continue the economic attacks, the economic blockade, and the aggression against us. We know the United States will try to prevent the elections and force a plebiscite or a constituent assembly, or support an internal seditious movement because the Civic Crusade movement failed. As everyone knows, that was just a balloon that quickly deflated.

In addition, the Civic Crusade was nothing but the opposition dyed white and promoted by the United States. Now, what is left for the United States to do? To boycott the elections. Why? Because with these elections, it will be crystal clear to the world that we do not have any problems in Panama, we are nationalists, we are anti-imperialists, and we will not allow a new aggression by the colossus of the north. That is my answer.

[Perez] Mr Toty Suarez, I think it would be a good idea if you explained to our listeners the bases of the PPR.

[Suarez] The party platform? I said the PPR hopes that medication, the Health Ministry, and the Social Security System reach everyone. For example, we would like to have some sort of socialized medicine in Panama. But you must remember Panama is a heavily infiltrated country. It is a capitalist country. It is probably the most infiltrated country in Latin America. We must not be deceived by that. I think we Panamanians are making a triple effort in this struggle. I have told several international reporters that we Panamanians were the first in Latin America to brush our teeth with Colgate, chew Adams Chiclets, drink Coca Cola, use Arrow shirts, and use phrases like one way [last two words in English] and close the window [last word in English]. All of these things have affected us, even in the education of the new generations we are now guiding.

The PPR is a party that seeks social balances. For example, it wants social justice to prevail in Panama and the large popular masses to have access to medicine and education. The PPR is a nationalist, pro-Third World, nonaligned, anti-imperialist, antioligarchic party that applies principles of pure social democracy—but only in essence, because it does not belong to any international social democracy organization. It is a party of the center left that looks favorably upon the revolutionary movements, that admires the Cuban revolution and the Nicaraguan revolution. This is the PPR platform.

[Perez] We have learned that Panamanian youths widely support your party. Could you tell us about that?

[Suarez] Without giving you a breakdown by age of the people that honor us with their support, I could say we have members of all ages. We have told them that youth is not a chronological age, but a mental age. We have some 70-year-old youths in the party, while other parties have some old folks in their 20's. Now, regarding chronological age, our party is the one with the largest youth membership. We are trying to rally around the leadership of Manuel Antonio Noriega. The party leaders and people's leaders are doing this. Therefore, the answer is: The PPR's backbone is composed of very young people.

CECE President Notes Cooperation With USSR

FL0212041088 Havana Television Service in Spanish 0100 GMT 2 Dec 88

[Text] The development of cooperation relations between Cuba and the Soviet Union has shown the world the call made by underdeveloped countries for a new international economic order. This was said by Ernesto Melendez, minister president of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation, CECE.

During a news conference, the leader stressed that since the signing of the first agreement in 1960, the USSR has consistently supported Cuba in all areas of economic and social development.

Regarding the outlook for this cooperation, he said a document was signed in May of this year which constitutes the long-range platform for the multiphased relations. The CECE minister president acknowledged the work of thousands of Soviet specialists who have been a basic factor for the realization of numerous goals of our country's economic development.

* 'Illicit Enrichment' by State Workers Viewed

32480016 Havana CUBA SOCIALISTA in Spanish Sep-Oct 88 pp 126-132

[Article by Dr Juan Vega Vega, professor of law, University of Havana]

[Text] The reform of the 1979 Penal Code of Cuba brought about a whole new text, since the changes made in the majority of the penal law's articles made it necessary to propose that the country's legislative and constituent body replace the entire code. For this reason, now we can speak of the Code of 1987, just as we used to speak of the Code of 1979.

One of the postulates of the reform of this legislation, which originated in the modernization of our penal law, is decriminalization. This concept includes the elimination of a relatively large number of subcategories of crimes, many of which have been made infractions. Nevertheless, the need to adjust the penal law to Cuba's socioeconomic reality also made it necessary to introduce some categories of crimes that had not been in the 1979 Penal Code.

The most important one is the crime called "illicit enrichment," whose revolutionary connotation links it to the very foundations of the socialist system. The crime is defined as follows: "Any authority, official, or employee who, directly or through an intermediary, makes expenditures or adds to his own assets or those of a third party, in an amount not commensurate with his legal income, without demonstrating the lawfulness of the means employed to make the expenditures or to obtain the additional assets, is subject to 2 to 5 years' imprisonment and/or a fine of 300 to 1,000 points.

"Those found guilty of committing the crime set forth in this article shall also be subject to the additional penalty of the confiscation of property.

"The penalties set forth in this article shall be imposed as long as the act does not constitute a more serious offense."

The legal interpretation of the term "enrichment" is different from its ordinary usage. To enrich oneself is to become rich; that is, wealthy or affluent, according to the dictionaries of our language. But the term has a very different meaning when used in the legal context. Thus, the Civil Code recently passed by the National Assembly of the People's Government includes among the causes for legal action what is called "undue enrichment," which is defined in Article 100 as follows: "Undue enrichment occurs when assets are transferred from one person's holdings to another's without just cause." It goes on to provide that anyone who enriches himself at the expense of another shall be obliged to pay the corresponding restitution.

As we have seen in our reading of the definition of the crime of illicit enrichment, the Penal Code also contains an interpretation of that term that is different from the vernacular usage, so we can conclude that for both civil and penal legislation, undue or illicit enrichment is the transfer of property or assets to the holdings of the enriched person without just cause or in an illicit manner. The transfer does not necessarily have to make the recipient wealthy or affluent.

The crime of illicit enrichment should be analyzed, first of all, in the context of our ideology. In a bourgeois society the prevailing philosophy is that all enrichment is legitimate unless the contrary is proven. In contrast, in a socialist society enrichment is to be repudiated, in both the colloquial and the legal senses of the term, if it is not produced in a lawful manner. No one should have or enjoy anything that is not the fruit of his labor, something he has inherited, or something that has been given or donated to him. Any income that is obtained by another means violates the essential principles of our workers' society. Some of these principles are expressly stated in the Constitution of the Republic.

Article 1 of the Cuban Constitution of 1976 consecrates a fundamental principle of our society: The Republic of Cuba is a socialist state of workers, peasants, and other manual and intellectual workers. According to Article 42, citizens receive equal pay for equal work, regardless of their race, color, or national origin. In our country, the socialist principle of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his work" holds true, as stated in Article 19. Article 22 of the Constitution guarantees individual ownership of the income and savings derived from one's own labor, of the residence one occupies with a proper title deed, and of such other property and goods as may meet the individual's material and cultural needs, including the tools and implements of personal and family work that are not used to exploit other people's work. And finally, Article 24 establishes that the law regulates the right to inherit one's own residence and other personal property.

The property owned by a person in our country, with the exception of cases of donation, may come from just two legitimate sources: either as a result of personal labor, or through inheritance. There is no other way to own or possess property in Cuba, because the exploitation of man by man has disappeared, and no games of chance are allowed by law. Gambling, which is defined as both a crime and a personal infraction, includes lotteries, raffles, betting, and any other game of chance that is played for the purpose of making a profit or winning money.

The crime of illicit enrichment does not generally require that one become wealthy or affluent, although some such cases may exist. Indeed, the factual basis of the crime that appears in Article 150 of the 1987 Penal Code requires only a small result, given that it is defined as making expenditures or adding to one's own or another's assets in an amount not commensurate with one's real

income. Of course, adding to one's assets could result in one's becoming wealthy or affluent, but this is not necessary; it is enough simply to increase one's assets in a manner not consistent with one's earnings. In this case, the factual basis translates into possession: One obtains assets (real or personal property, material or financial resources) that one could not legally possess.

This is a case of introducing a completely new penal concept into our legislation. Such a development could only be possible under socialism, at least to the degree that it appears in the 1987 Penal Code.

When looking for a historical antecedent for this type of crime, we find a definition in the Italian Penal Code dating back to the end of the last century, to which Manzini referred as a crime of mere suspicion.

In his monumental "Tratado de Derecho Penal" [Treatise on Penal Law], Vincenzo Manzini cites the provisions of Article 708 of the Italian Penal Code of his day as an example of the crime of mere suspicion. That article states that an individual is guilty of this crime if he has a record of certain offenses or is subject to a security measure and is found in the possession of money or objects of value that are not in keeping with his legal income, and cannot account for the source.

Manzini deals with crimes of mere suspicion by analyzing acts of commission and omission, because different types of possession do not correspond exactly to commission, and of course have nothing to do with omission.

For example, in our Penal Code, are the possession of tools suitable for committing the crime of theft, the illegal possession of objects of our cultural heritage, the possession of foreign currencies or items denominated in foreign currencies, the illegal possession of weapons or explosives, and the possession of toxic drugs or similar substances acts of commission or omission? We have to accept that alternative, because our Penal Code, in defining the crime, considers it a socially dangerous commission or omission.

The crime of illicit enrichment is a penal offense that is perpetrated by commission, but what is the act of commission? If it is the act that originates the crime, then most likely it corresponds to another offense, since the act of taking possession of something illegally is an unlawful act. But, as has always been the case with crimes of possession, despite our technical scruples, we have to admit that illicit enrichment is a crime of commission.

This is the first problem we can find in analyzing the new crime of illicit enrichment. In his discussion of the offense of possession of tools suitable for committing the crime of theft (which appeared in Article 525 of the Code of Social Defense and in the Spanish Code of 1870 that prevailed in Cuba until 1938), Evelio Tabio recalls in his "Comentarios al Codigo de Defensa Social" [Commentaries on the Code of Social Defense] that this offense has given rise to lengthy disquisitions because its application is not acceptable to some. Nonetheless, he asserts that possession is an act, without going into whether it is an act of commission or omission. Nor does he say that it is a crime of mere suspicion, although he recognizes that the personal situation of the defendant will be an essential factor in evaluating his conduct, because if a subject of good character who is a worker has this kind of tool in his possession and cannot justify and specifically explain such possession, perhaps his conduct will serve to eliminate any suspicion.

I have no doubt that certain types of possession that are criminal offenses incriminate out of mere suspicion. The case of tools suitable for theft is very clear, but the crimes of possession of toxic drugs, which leads to the suspicion of trafficking, and possession of foreign currency, which also suggests trafficking, are also crimes of mere suspicion.

Few criminal law scholars have taken the time to examine the curious crimes of mere suspicion. Quintano Ripolles is one who has.

In his work "Compendio de Derecho Penal" [Compendium of Criminal Law], Quintano refers to the mere possession of picklocks or other tools designed specifically for theft, without any exculpatory evidence, and contends that, rather than an autonomous crime, this is a legally defined preparatory act. He adds, however, that "it also shows the characteristics of an infraction of suspicion."

It is interesting to go into a brief analysis of the perpetrator of this crime. In general, penal codes tend to refer to the perpetrator in a generic way, sometimes with the phrase "anyone who" or the equivalent, which means that any individual could be a perpetrator; but on occasion, as in the case of illicit enrichment, a particular personal quality is required to be an active agent, and this quality becomes an element of the offense. The perpetrator of illicit enrichment must necessarily be an authority, an official, or an employee, and since the offense is listed under the title that covers Crimes Against Administration and Jurisdiction, it must apply to state workers. The term "employee" includes all possible occupational categories within state entities.

We repeat that this is a crime that can only be committed by those who work for the state, in any function or position. If someone who works for the state shows up spending money or increasing his assets in a way that is not consistent with his income, and if that person cannot point to any legitimate source, it is reasonable to suspect that the proceeds have been obtained illicitly.

If the income that the suspect spent or used to increase his assets did not come from a legitimate source, that is, did not come from either his labor or an inheritance, where did it come from? Obviously, it would have to be the result of one or more crimes, such as embezzlement, misappropriation, swindle, fraud, usurpation, blackmail, extortion, robbery, theft, the illegal slaughter of large

livestock and the sale of the meat, illicit economic activity, speculation and hoarding, abuse in the exercise of public office, gambling, drug trafficking, bribery, or corruption. When faced with the crime of illicit enrichment, however, we do not presume that any of these other offenses have been committed, just the crime of illicit enrichment.

Thus, we come up against the third great question that arises out of the examination of this new type of crime. Suspicions about the illicit origin of the enrichment are no substitute for proof of another crime, and do not serve as the basis for presuming guilt of that other crime; rather, it is the suspicion itself that constitutes the crime of illicit enrichment, independently of any other crime suspected.

Furthermore, the failure to account for the legitimate origin of the enrichment is not an element of this new offense; it is an actual punishable condition. If the suspect cannot prove the legitimate source, then the suspicion will be grounded and illicit enrichment will exist as a crime.

It is interesting to note that when Manzini considered that offense in the Italian Penal Code to which we have referred as the crime of mere suspicion, that is, the unjustified possession of property by someone who has a criminal record or has been subject to security measures, another Italian author, Delitala, expressed the opinion that this was not a crime of suspicion but a suspicion of crime. Manzini replied to Delitala, quite correctly, that his opinion was simply a play on words, because one is not punished for the crime he is suspected of having committed, but for the possession of that property.

The suspicion that is the essential grounds for this new type of crime must be very well founded. Even in the conditions of our socialist society, to accuse someone of this crime it is necessary for the personal situation of the possible perpetrator to provide some grounds for suspecting that the enrichment, which comes to light as a result of his spending or increased assets, came from an illicit source. It is not a matter of requiring all citizens to make a personal accounting of their income and spending, justifying every purchase. Thus, the Public Prosecutor's Office, which is responsible for taking penal action, must be especially cautious and careful in this regard.

On the other hand, I do not have the slightest doubt that the presence of this new type of crime in our Penal Code will contribute significantly to the continuing process of social rectification, to combating those who, guided by their selfishness, will stop at nothing to enjoy benefits they do not deserve. In the first place, this is a violation of the principle of distribution that says that each of us should receive according to our work.

When there is well-founded suspicion that there is a case of illicit enrichment, the responsible authority or the prosecutor will ask the suspect to explain the legitimate source of the resources utilized to make the expenditure or obtain the property. Only if the suspect cannot do so is penal action warranted. The failure to justify, therefore, becomes an indispensable objective condition of punishment, or an inescapable requirement for prosecution.

The main penalty for this crime is not very severe: up to 5 years in prison. In many cases, it will be less than the penalty for the crimes the recipient of the illicit enrichment is suspected of committing. There is also the alternative of a fine of 500 to 2,000 points, which may be imposed in conjunction with imprisonment. But the additional, mandatory penalty provided for in Article 150, confiscation of property, is especially important.

It is clear that, as Paragraph 3 of that article states, when it is possible to prove the existence of the crime or crimes that originated the illicit enrichment, and these acts are punishable by harsher sentences under the Penal Code, the defendant will be punished for these offenses rather than illicit enrichment.

The definition of illicit enrichment as a crime will undoubtedly contribute to the climate of honesty and total cleanliness in the management or administration of state resources, which belong to all the people, and in the personal actions of those who work for the state apparatus at all levels. But for this purpose, the law must be enforced with the utmost discretion and care. Certainly the Popular Supreme Court, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, and the Interior Ministry will adopt the necessary measures to ensure that only genuine cases of illicit enrichment will be prosecuted.

Antigua and Barbuda

Minister Departs for Miami Trade Conference

FL2911201088 Bridgetown CANA in English
1750 GMT 29 Nov 88

[Text] St. Johns, Antigua, Nov 29, CANA—Trade Minister Hugh Marshall was due to leave here today to attend the Miami conference on the Caribbean which will discuss matters pertaining to regional trade and investment. The other member of the delegation is Ethlyn Simon, manager of the Industrial Development Board (IDB).

Two priorty areas at the conference are expected to be the garment industry and agro business. Also down for discussion will the the illicit drug trade and the possible impact of the 1992 unification of European markets.

More than 2,000 officials, businessmen and economists will attend the conference.

Home Affairs Minister Suffers Apparent Stroke

FL0212211588 Bridgetown CANA in English
2018 GMT 2 Dec 88

[Text] St. Johns, Antigua, Dec 2, CANA—Antigua and Barbuda's Home Affairs Minister Christopher Omarde has been hospitalised here following an apparent stroke, sources close to him said Friday.

The source said the Prime Minister Vere Bird paid Omarde a visit Thrusday.

Dominica

Parliament Passes New Drug Prevention Act

FL0512193488 Bridgetown CANA in English 1958 GMT 3 Dec 88

[Text] Roseau, Dominica, Dec 3, CANA—Dominicans convicted of being in possession of illegal drugs for the purpose of trafficking can now face up to EC200,000 dollars (one East Caribbean dollar—37 U.S. cents) in fines or life imprisonment with the passing of a new drug prevention act here.

The drug (Prevention of Misuse) Act, presented by Attorney General Brian Alleyne this week, received the full support of Parliament.

The penalties can be summarily imposed on anyone trafficking in a school, prison or military premises.

Alleyne said many young people had lost their minds to drug abuse, and that government was determined to get rid of the illegal trade.

The act names 100 drugs in Class A including coca leaf and cocaine, 13 as class B including marijuana and ten as Class C.

The act also provides for the appointment of a seven to eleven member advisory council by the minister who has wide powers in its execution.

Opposition Senator Vic Riviere suggested government appoint members of all political persuasions to sit on the proposed council. The opposition underscored the need for more prison space and the appointment of more prison officers, a drug rehabilitation programme, and efforts to address the socio-economic problems that force people to turn to the illicit drug trade.

15 Aids Carriers Diagnosed in Country

FL0512185288 Bridgetown CANA in English 1501 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Text] Roseau, Dominica, Dec 5, CANA—Of 15 AIDS carriers diagnosed in Dominica, three are women, according to director of the Princess Margaret Hospital Laboratory, Roderck Fortune. Fortune made this disclosure Sunday on radio programme which formed part of extended activities marking World AIDS Day, which was last Friday. He said also that there was one confirmed AIDS case which had previously been diagnosed as a carrier.

Six of the persons in Dominica diagnosed as AIDS victims since January 1987 have died. According to the laboratory technican, 20 people in all have been diagnosed with AIDS in Dominica, including the six who died.

Dominican Republic

Judge Threatened After Blanco Sentencing

FL0312164388 Santo Domingo Cadena de Noticias in Spanish 0935 GMT 3 Dec 88

[Text] Police authorities have increased their surveillance at the home of Judge Juan Maria Severino in Puerto Plata. The measure was taken after Dr Severino said that so-called employees of the businessmen, [name indistinct], appeared at his home to inquire about his political [word indistinct].

The event occurred 1 day after Judge Severino sentenced former President Salvador Jorge Blanco and businessmen [first name indistinct] (Agmonte) and (Juan Tomas Pena Valentin) to 20 years in in prison [words indistinct].

This action caused the judge of the seventh criminal court to call on the corresponding authorities to provide more security for his family. Dr Severino also reported the incident to the chief of police and hours later, surveillance was doubled at the judge's home located in the (Aguilas Casas) sector in Puerto Plata.

Revolutionary Party Must Seal Party Rifts

FL2311173888 Santo Domingo Radio Mil Network in Spanish 1015 GMT 23 Nov 88

[Commentary from the "Preguntando" section]

[Text] The electoral judges have refused to correct the divided state in which the Dominican Revolutionary Party [PRD] finds itself. They have decided to put the leaders of the PRD, who have divided opinions, under the same roof.

Only time can tell how beneficial or disastrous this decision is for the PRD and for Dominican democracy itself. At this point, it is not possible to determine if the pinnacle of the Blanco Party [party of former President Jorge Blanco] is capable of forming lines once again and marching under one flag, forgetting the quarrels of the past; or, on the contrary, if the internal war that has taken the PRD to the edge of extinction will increase.

It is necessary to note that the Central Electoral Board has shown great maturity in its decisions since it has taken every precaution not to favor one side or the other. The future of the organization, which was founded in 1939 in Havana, Cuba by a group of anti-Trujillo exiles, has wound up in the very hands of the PRD members themselves. Now they will know what to do with their party. They will have to decide if they are willing to respect democratic procedures permitting the grass root sectors to elect their leaders and candidates for electoral positions.

Also in the hands of the PRD is the authority to decide if they wish to remain bottled up in internal strife while the other parties organize and strengthen themselves with their sights set on the elections of 1990.

PRD Secretary General on Pena Gomez Victory

FL2311165888 Santo Domingo Cadena de Noticias in Spanish 1001 GMT 23 Nov 88

[Text] Lic Hatuey Decamps [secretary general of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, PRD] said the decision made by the Central Electoral Board is a victory for Dr Jose Francisco Pena Gomez, who was recognized as president of the PRD.

Decamps said that no one can say [words indistinct] in reference to the decision made by the electoral board. In remarks made to the Cadena de Noticias newsroom, Lic Decamps said that this measure will help preserve the PRD.

[Begin Decamps recording] The decision to recogniz› Dr Jose Francisco Pena Gomez as president of the PRD is a victory for him and the PRD General Secretariat. No one can say that the victory is [words indistinct]. It demonstrates that the fight we carried out was an attempt to preserve the party and I think this has been accomplished.

At the same time, I would like to stress that at this time we, the members of the PRD, should not adopt a feudalism, which I think (?exists) among other comrades and former comrades. We should do the opposite. We should incorporate all those who want to work, who want the party to truly launch itself into its primary tasks. The party should relax its internal conflict—a struggle which has been wasteful—against comrades or former comrades, who, in one way or another, have their own merits. The party now has to proceed toward its fundamental objective, which is to lead the government once again; to show that the PRD has been able to present governments that can offer the Dominican people the better life that they are currently demanding. [end recording]

Grenada

State Minister Tenders Resignation to Blaize

FL3011233088 Bridgetown CANA in English 2135 GMT 30 Nov 88

[Text] St Georges, Grenada, Nov 30, CANA—Grenada's minister of state for labour and social services, Norton Noel, has resigned, complaining of "deep division among certain members of government". Noel's letter of resignation which takes effect from tomorrow was handed in today to Prime Minister Herbert Blaize. Noel has also submitted a letter to Governor-General Sir Paul Scoon resigning from the Senate where he was the leader of government's business.

Noel's decision to quit the government comes one month after Junior Minister of State for Carriacou and Petit Martinique Affairs John de Roche resigned. De Roche gave up his government post to support former interim government head Nicholas Brathwaite who is expected to run against Blaize in the next general election.

"A house divided against itself cannot stand. Grenada deserves much better than a government whose members are at each other's throat," Noel told Blaize. Noel also said in the letter that even Blaize's leadership is being "constantly challenged by a senior government member." In an interview with CANA, he later identified the person as Public Utilities Minister Dr Keith Mitchell who is also the general-secretary of the ruling New National Party (NNP).

Noel, a political detainee under Grenada's 1979-83 leftwing government, also chided Blaize in the letter for failing to deal with Mitchell. "As head of the government, you are sometimes slighted and even insulted in public by that said minister. Was that what we promised the electorate in 1984?", he asked. "Honestly, because of the disunity in both government and party, I forsee a bitter power struggle taking place at the party's convention in December. I don't wish to be part of it", he said.

In elaborating on the allegation, Noel said that he expected Mitchell to challenge Blaize's leadership at the convention expected in another two weeks. "If the power struggle does not materialize at the convention or thereafter, it is because of this letter to the prime minister", he added.

Noel also accused Blaize of demonstrating powerlessness in carrying out his stated objections to "certain characters" being recruited as members of the party. "Quite naturally, I would not be comfortable with such persons around, if only because of Grenada's recent past history", he told Blaize. Noel identified one such person as leftwing activist Prescott Swan who was recently selected as the party's care-taker candidate for the St Patrick's East Constituency. "More that 80 percent of the party's executive including the prime minister led opposition to the election of Swan since from all reports we have been having he is unacceptable to be a caretaker of the NNP", he remarked.

Blaize and Mitchell disagreed openly in front of party supporters during the November 2 meeting at which Swan was selected. The prime minister sought to block the election on the grounds that the party executive took a decision to postpone selection of caretakers but Mitchell said that he was not aware of any such decision. The NNP which holds a 9-6 majority in Parliament is preparing for elections due in another 15 months.

Noel also disclosed that he would shortly apply for membership of the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) formed two years ago by a group of minister's who defected from Blaize's NNP. He described Brathwaite who is due to take over the NDC leadership in January from former Education Minister Geroge Brizan "as the most qualified person to lead Grenada into the 21st century". "I am sensing that the country is in for a rough period if we did not find the right person with the right team to lead this country. If not this country could be in a lot of trouble again", he remarked.

Blaize 'Not Surprised'

FL0312174488 Bridgetown CANA in English 1823 GMT 1 Dec 88

[Text] St Georges, Dec 1, CANA—Grenada's Prime Minister Herbert Blaize said Thursday he was not surprised about the resignation Wednesday of Minister of State for Labour and Local Government Norton Noel. On an interview with CANA, Blaize said that he regarded the resignation as one of those "settling down things" of the 4-year-old government.

"When we came into power, we came with a lot of different kinds of people," he remarked.

Noel was a member of the Grenada Democratic Movement (GDM) faction of the 3-party coalition government.

Most GDM members along with those of the National Democratic Party (NDP) of former Education Minister George Brizan have since quit the government to form the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC).

Blaize, who headed the Grenada National Party (GNP) before the coalition, said that as far as he was concerned, "we are settling down." "Some people resign before they get thrown out," he added.

Noel in his letter of resignation said that he did not want to be part of the continuing power struggle between Blaize and Public Utilities Minister Dr Keith Mitchell. He also predicted a power struggle between the two at the December 10-11 annual convention of the NNP with Mitchell trying to remove Blaize as party leader.

When asked about the potential power struggle, Blaize said: "...I don't expect anything until it happens. Nothing comes one day before its time."

Meanwhile, authoritative sources said five front-runners have emerged to fill two vacancies on the government side as a result of Noel's resignation and that of surgeon Stan Friday last month. Among the five named are businessman David Lander, former diplomat Harry Ogilvie, and the party's caretaker candidate for St Georges north-east, John Munroe.

NDC Leader Comments

FL0312174388 Bridgetown CANA in English 1839 GMT 1 Dec 88

[Text] St Georges, Grenada, Dec 1, CANA—Leader of Grenada's opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) George Brizan says Wednesday's resignation by Minister of State for Labour Norton Noel is further indication of the division and weakness of the government.

Brizan, who resigned from the government two years ago, said the Herbert Blaize administration was clearly an unstable one. He told CANA that since the government was voted into office in 1984, the record showed that 11 members of parliament, including five elected ones, had resigned.

"I think this is a record and it's unprecedented in the history of electoral politics in Grenada, Carriacou, and Petit Martinique," he said.

Brizan added that the resignation of Noel was clear evidence of "the erratic deterioration of the internal personal relations" within the ruling New National Party (NNP) government. "It suggests to me definitely that a number of people within that party are not enjoying being inside there," he said.

Noel, the second minister to leave the government within the past month, quit citing growing internal bickering between government ministers, particularly Prime Minister Herbert Blaize and Public Utilities Minister Dr Keith Mitchell. Noel accused Blaize of demonstrating weakness in dealing with Mitchell who has often challenged him in public.

Brizan said that the reason given by Noel for leaving government exposed as "pure sham" a statement made by Blaize in 1987 and often repeated that "nine united is better than 12 divided."

The prime minister made the statement shortly after Brizan and two other ministers resigned leaving the NNP with a 9-6 majority in Parliament.

Brizan said that it was clear from Noel's resignation letter that Blaize, the ailing leader, is "weak and impotent."

Haiti

Marche a Terre Massacre Commemorated

FL0612191088 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Text] Tomorrow, 6 December, a monument will be inaugurated in Les Cayes in memory of the peasants who died in the Marche a Terre massacre.

Mrs (Suzie Castor) gave a lecture on that event yesterday morning in Les Cayes. Also, KID [Confederation for Democratic Unity], APN [People's National Assembly], and Professor Roger Gaillard are going to give a lecture this morning on the topic: "Haiti Following the American Occupation."

Here is our correspondent from Les Cayes with details.

[Correspondent Raymond Clerge] Mrs (Suzie Castor), who works at (Crisfed), which is the Center for Economic and Social Research and Training for Development, gave a lecture followed by a discussion yesterday, Sunday, 4 December, at a [words indistinct] in Les Cayes on the events that took place in Marche a Terre.

Mrs (Castor) was invited to host the lecture discussion by Mupac [expansion unknown] and SAJ [Solidarity Among Youth]. The event was held to mark the 59th anniversary of the killing of a Haitian candidate by the Americans, in Marche a Terre.

Mrs (Castor) talked about the American occupation and about its causes and consequences, which the Haitian people are still feeling today. She then talked about what happened in Marche a Terre—another important event in Haitian history, which the Haitian people should never forget.

Among the questions asked was: What is the connection between 1915 and 1988?

Mrs (Castor) answered that in 1915 there were two groups in the confrontation, with neither group able to win out over the other: the oligarchy and the masses. This created a crisis in the government. The same situation exists today in 1988, and the same problem again has the government apparatus in crisis.

The other (?similarity) highlighted was that in 1915, the system in place rendered life very difficult for the masses. We are seeing this again in 1988. The system in place is not conducive to the country's development, and renders life very difficult for Haitians. The only difference between 1915 and 1988 is that in 1988 more people have become aware of the fact that this system (?still to this day) cannot solve the country's problems.

The question then arose as to whether this meant that another occupation was possible. The answer to this was not precise. Mrs (Castor) did point out, however, that Haiti is not Grenada. The lecture ended with those words.

Still within the framework of the 59th anniversary of the Marche a Terre massacre, this morning KID, APN, and Roger Gaillard are going to hold another lecture followed by a discussion at 1000 at the same place. The subject of this morning's lecture is: "Haiti Following the American Occupation."

Also, there will be a big patriotic vigil this evening on the parade grounds in Les Cayes.

This is Raymond Clerge, Radio Soleil, in Les Cayes.

Committee To Mark Anniversary

FL0612184588 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1505 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Text] The 59th anniversary of the massacre of the peasants of Marche a Terre is to be commemorated. This massacre occurred in December of 1930, during the American occupation.

This year, a committee in solidarity with the peasants of southern Haiti has been formed. This committee is to organize demonstrations and other activities to commemorate the 59th anniversary of this massacre.

PNCH Wants Namphy, Regala Prosecuted

FL0612193688 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Excerpt] The Nationalistic Christian Party of Haiti [PNCH] says it applauds the government decree creating a new investigating committee to investigate the massacre of Haitian citizens in different parts of Haiti, particularly on Ruelle Vaillant, on the occasion of the aborted 29 November 1987 elections. The PNCH says it has doubts as to whether the government is really willing to find out the truth about these tragic events. The PNCH says it is tempted to believe that the government is wasting time in order to lull the Haitian people.

In other words, says the PNCH, if the government does not want people to interpret things this way, it should undertake a few actions—such as initiating proceedings against Generals Namphy and Regala, whose involvement in the massacre people cannot fail to see because of the activities in which the two generals were constantly involved with back then. If this were to be done, the people could begin to hope that these two men, who thoroughly merit the nation's reprobation, might be extradited.

The PNCH also asks the government to order the public prosecutor to take measures aimed at preventing certain citizens from leaving the country—such as the people who have been repeatedly accused of being responsible for the 29 November massacre and the members of the first investigating committee. The PNCH says it doesn't understand the way the first committee carried out its investigation. The PNCH sees in it a sort of complicity. [passage omitted]

International Human Rights Forum Scheduled

FL0612194788 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1505 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Five local organizations for the defense of human rights will take stock of the human rights situation in Haiti on 9 and 10 December. These organizations are organizing an international forum to be held in

Port-au-Prince on those dates. Furthermore, in connection with the United Nations, the local human rights organizations decreed the week of 5-11 December human rights week in Haiti.

The government has also adhered. It invites local human rights organizations and educational institutions to organize colloqiums, expositions, or meetings with a view to clarifying man's universal rights for all Haitians. [passage omitted]

Night Robberies Resume in Sectors, Provinces

FL0612214988 Port-au-Prince Radio Soleil Network in Creole 1200 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Excerpts] Robberies at night have resumed in different sectors of Haiti. Provinces are reporting robberies also. Last week our correspondent informed us that there had been several robberies in the Mirebalais area. Also, our correspondent in Cabaret reports armed robberies in Deschappelles, second communal section of Cabaret, last Wednesday night.

[Correspondent Jean Joseph Sanon] There have been two armed robberies in Cabaret in less than a week.

Last Wednesday night, four men armed with firearms, long knives, long sharpened iron rods, and ropes forced Mrs (Dupera) to open her door; then they entered her house. This happened in Deschapelles, second communal section of Cabaret. They searched the house thoroughly for money, scattering everything, and they told her that if she did not give them money they would kill her little granddaughter who was at home with her. She managed to find approximately $100 to give them.

Almost the same scenario was repeated on Saturday night, and there was shooting in front of the home of (Magela Gelsey), whom everyone knows as (Magela Bonne), again in the second section of Cabaret. Again, four men carrying the same kinds of weapons we described earlier first sawed the chain off the gate. Once inside the yard, they demanded that the owner open the door. [passage omitted]

The thieves explained to the boy that they had not come to beat or kill anyone, but that they were forced to act.

Meanwhile, the others turned the house upside down, looking for money. [passage omitted] The residents were able to come up with only $45, which the men accepted. They then fled.

We point out that at this house the men pulled down the switch [preceding word in English] as soon as they entered; they were not wearing masks, nor were they wearing uniforms. [passage omitted]

Salinas Announces Government Appointments

PA0612144388 [Editorial Report] Mexico City Red Nacional 13 Imevision Television in Spanish at 0130 GMT on 5 December reports the following government appointments by Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari:

Justo Ceja	Presidential private secretary
Manuel Cadena Morales	General Director of Mexican Fertilizers
Ignacio Madrazo Reynoso	Director of Azucar, S.A.
Jaime Corredor	General Director of International Bank
Octavio Gomez	Director of Banca Cremi Public Accountant
Ramon Aguirre Velasquez	General Director of National Lottery
Ignacio Duran Loyra	Director of the Mexican Film Institute

Appointments in Office of the Attorney General's of the Federal District:

Abram Polo Uzcanga	Deputy Attorney General [subprocurador] of preliminary investigations
Gustavo Barreto Rangel	Deputy Attorney General of Legal Actions [subprocuradoria de procesos]
Miguel Angel Garcia Dominguez	Special assistant attorney general for investigations concerning the murder of journalist Manuel Buendia
Rafael Rocha Cordero	Director of Federal District Judicial Police
Rafael Moreno	Director of Federal District Police Judicial Affairs Office
Celestino Porte Petit	Coordinator of Consultative Board of the Office of the Attorney General of the Federal District
Manuel Mondragon Ical	Coordinator of Participation, Orientation, and Services for Citizens
Octavio Campos Ortiz	Director of Press and Broadcasting
Francisco Javier Alejo	General Director of Mexican Commerce Secretariat National Storage System
Juan Manuel Pasalagua	Director of National Company for Basic Commodities (Conasupo) agrarian marketing
Oscar Cruz Ruiz	Director of Conasupo Operations
Raul Salinas de Gortari	Director of Conasupo Planning Office
Oscar Ramirez Suarez	Director of Conasupo Social Communications Office
Ignacio Errejon	Director of Conasupo Processed Milk (Liconsa)
Fernando Ordorica	Director of Liconsa
Salvador Giordano	Director of Conasupo Processed Corn
Fernando Peon Escalante	Director of Conasupo Distributing Agency
Juan Manuel Herrera	Director of Conasupo Office for Promotion of Small Businesses.

El Salvador

FMLN Attacks San Miguel, Claims 28 Casualties

PA0612192388 Paris AFP in Spanish 0556 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Excerpt] San Salvador, 5 Dec (AFP)—The FMLN has issued a report claiming that late this evening its forces attacked two important military positions in the city of San Miguel, 136 km east of San Salvador, inflicting 28 casualties on the Salvadoran Army.

A Radio Venceremos report heard here stated that the attack on the 3d Infantry Brigade barracks (the most important barracks the Armed Forces have in the eastern part of the country) and on the elite Arce Battalion, on the west side of San Miguel—a city with a population of more than 100,000—produced 25 casualties.

The report by the rebel radio station notes that the other three Army casualties were inflicted as a result of clashes on the outskirts of San Miguel, the third most important Salvadoran city. The rebels also claimed the destruction of a drugstore and a store in downtown San Miguel.

In spite of the attack, which began at approximately 2000 Monday and continued for 1 hour, electricity and communications services functioned normally throughout the city.

A San Miguel police spokesman has told AFP that the city's residents and Army troops remain alert fearing a "large-scale" attack by the guerrillas in the next few hours.

Army infantry units this evening are carrying out intense patrol operations in various parts of San Miguel, and Air Force helicopters are continuously flying over the city, the police source said.

In San Salvador, Coprefa has issued no official report on the situation but has promised that in the next few hours it will have a report. The commander of the 111th Brigade, Col Mauricio Vargas, is directing the counterinsurgency operations launched this evening on the outskirts of the San Miguel to find the attacking guerrilla column, the sources said. [passage omitted]

More on Attack

PA0612193788 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Report by Francisco Ferrufino from San Miguel—live]

[Excerpt] We have a report on last night's fire: There was a light attack against the 3d Infantry Brigade, Arce Battalion, certain areas of Milagros de La Paz residential neighborhood, and the Los Leones factories. In that same area there were shots fired on the outskirts of La Union. These attacks alarmed the San Miguel residents, but the situation was brought under control by the Army, who deployed surface and air troops inside and outside the city of San Miguel. City patrols lasted until daybreak. [passage omitted]

FMLN Issues 'War Bulletin'

PA0612222888 San Salvador Radio Cadena Sonora in Spanish 1200 GMT 6 Dec 88

[FMLN War Bulletin No 2 issued in El Salvador on 5 December; read by unidentified FMLN member over the telephone—recorded]

[Text] Military forces of the northeastern Francisco Sanchez Front began the "The People's Power, Strength, and Organization Lead the March Toward Rebellion" operation on 5 December. The operation began at 1930, when several stores were bombed in downtown San Miguel, causing a large fire. Simultaneously, the FMLN forces blew up two electric poles on Roosevelt Ave, between the Guadalupe and Santa Julia neighborhoods, San Miguel.

FMLN forces attacked the 3d Infantry Brigade Garrison in San Miguel. The FMLN forces also occupied the Santa Julia and Milagro de la Paz neighborhoods, where we met with the population and distributed propaganda. Simultaneously, our forces distributed propaganda and held brief meetings in the Guadalupe, Mozatlan, Escolan, and Jucuapa neighborhoods.

Similarly, our forces blocked roads and placed propaganda bombs in other parts of San Miguel, including Ciudad Jardin, Los Leones, Rio Grande, Milagro de la Paz, 15 September, and other neighborhoods, as well as in the area surrounding the Barraza Stadium. In some of those places our forces clashed with enemy forces, and we had the people's support in all those clashes.

At 2020, our forces conducted a simultaneous artillery attack on the 3d Infantry Brigade Garrison and the Arce Battalion barracks. We confirmed that 10 grenades hit the 3d Infantry Brigade installations. The enemy responded by firing flares while several helicopters and one C-47 plane arrived and overflew the area.

At 0000, FMLN forces attacked the military base on Cacahuatique Hill, Morazan Department. It is the most important military communications base in that area. Simultaneously, our forces attacked the Military Detachment No 4 barracks in San Francisco Gotera, Morazan Department, and the detachment's perimeter positions, inflicting many casualties. Also at 0000, we attacked Army positions on Quirimba Hill near San Francisco Gotera and Army positions at Dos Matas hamlet, Quilanzas. We also attacked the San Francisco Gotera Air Base, better known as the Quilanzas landing strip. We occupied the towns of Guatajiagua, Yamabal, and Sensenbra, Morazan Department.

FMLN forces also attacked enemy positions in El Olostique, Villa El Triunfo, and Chapeltique, San Miguel Department, at 2000 on 5 December. In addition, at 2200 FMLN forces occupied a section of the Pan-American Highway between the towns of Carolina and Ciudad Barrios. FMLN forces sabotaged power towers along the Pan-American Highway as well as sections of the highway.

On 5 December the people's organized forces—through the revolutionary units of the northeastern Francisco Sanchez Front—unleashed their power and combat skills and turned their rejection of hunger, misery, and repression into very strong blows.

We tell our people that our task is to get organized, armed, and ready for our rebellion.

[Signed] FMLN Commanders Leonel Gonzalez, Roberto Roca, German Cienfuegos, Shafik Jorge Handal, and Joaquin Villalobos

El Salvador, 5 December 1988

Colonel Downplays Attack

PA0612234288 San Salvador Radio Cadena Sonora in Spanish 1700 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Interview with Army Colonel Mauricio Ernesto Vargas, 3d Infantry Brigade commander, by unidentified reporter on 6 December; place not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Vargas] First, we would like to comment on the attack to clarify the situation for the listeners of this radio station. We must not be fooled by Marxist-Leninist rhetoric. The FMLN has tried, once again, through irrational and insane violence planned through a totalitarian scheme, to terrorize the population. The FMLN wants people to be frustrated with the system we defend. The FMLN is also trying to cause hopelessness and a loss of faith in our democratic system through brutal, criminal, and irrational violence.

We want to tell you that the attack did not inflict one single casualty on the 3d Infantry Brigade Garrison in San Miguel. We know that only one person was killed in Morazan. We want to tell you that the FMLN conducted terrorist military actions that were not aimed at military targets. Bombs went off in shopping malls such as Comercial Gigante, Hispanoamerica Bookstore, and La Mariposa Store, which was engulfed in fire. The rebels placed explosives and incendiary bombs to harm the economy and to have a psychological effect on the population. These attacks are aimed at getting the attention of the local and foreign press and are part of the rebels' propaganda plans.

We found a number of weapons, including 8 M-16 rifles with 22 cartridge clips and 1,190 cartridges. We also confiscated 8 homemade bombs made with aluminum and chlorate; Soviet-made grenades; Molotov cocktails, which are bottles filled with gasoline; 5 gallons of gasoline for setting fires; oil; paint; propaganda; 2 Soviet-made pistols; 2 .45-caliber pistols; and many bombs. We would also like to tell you that the criminal and murderous actions of the FMLN are terrorist actions to subdue people by terror. We will intensity our efforts to reduce...[changes thought] We saved four stores yesterday. We were unable to save a fifth store, because we could not see the damage being done. However, we saved the other four. The rebels tried to take a bus and burn it with their gasoline, but they fled like cowards when the troops arrived. We conducted a very heavy security operation against the urban FMLN death squads. [passage omitted]

Today, the FMLN claims victories that are only science fiction novels. It claims nonexistent results that do not agree with reality, but with a propaganda scheme.

[Reporter] Colonel, were any civilians killed or wounded?

[Vargas] Thus far, we have only a report of one person being wounded by gunfire while resisting having his car stolen. His daughter was also wounded. We do not know his name or the hospital to which he was taken, but we received that report. It was an attack on a civilian who was defending his property.

[Reporter] Did that take place in San Miguel?

[Vargas] All of that took place in San Miguel. There was also a harassment operation in San Francisco Gotera. The FMLN speaks of attacking 14 municipalities and 2 department capitals. It is merely following its propaganda scheme. Through their very hackneyed broadcasts, they try to spread their presence in the country. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] The FMLN announced the beginning of its "Everybody To Prepare the Rebellion" operation. Does the Army believe the FMLN is strong enough to stage a rebellion?

[Vargas] The rebels are definitely a bunch of frauds. They have neither the capacity nor the people's support to conduct a rebellion. A rebellion is conducted with the people's support, and the defense of democracy is also conducted with the people's support. In 8 years they have been unable to carry out a rebellion, and we in that time have been able to defend our democracy. You see who really has the people's support. [passage omitted]

'Communique No 3' Issued

PA0712021488 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0040 GMT 7 Dec 88

["Communique No 3" issued by the FMLN General Command in El Salvador on 6 December; monitored in progress]

[Text] ...the FMLN General Command informs the Salvadoran people and the local and foreign press that:

1. On Monday, 5 December 1988, the FMLN started a new national, political, military campaign called: "Everybody To Prepare the Rebellion."

2. We began the aforementioned national campaign with our regional operation conducted in San Miguel and Morazan Departments. Our regional operation is called: "The People's Power, Strength, and Organization Lead the March Toward Rebellion."

With an ample deployment of our military and regular forces, urban commandos, militias, and insurrectional detachments, we attacked the 3d Infantry Brigade Garrison, the Arce Battalion barracks in San Miguel City, and the Military Detachment No 4 barracks in San Francisco Gotera. In addition, we attacked military bases and positions located on the Quilanga landing strip, [word indistinct] Hill, [word indistinct], Cacahuatique, Dos Matas, Altos del Aguacate [words indistinct] a total of 14 towns, including two department capitals and San Francisco Gotera, Villa El Triunfo, Lolotique, Chapeltique, Corinto, San Isidro, San Simon, Ocicala, Guatajiagua, Yamabal, [words indistinct] Concepcion, and [words indistinct]. Political, military actions [words indistinct] in the neighborhoods of Guadalupe, [words indistinct], Mozatlan, Milagro de la Paz, and 15 September. The clashes, whose [words indistinct] lasted 1 hour and in San Francisco Gotera, [word indistinct] de Concepcion, [words indistinct] clashes lasted until 0300 on 6 December.

3. A preliminary report on the casualties inflicted on the enemy during our operation notes that we inflicted 28 casualties in San Miguel City and 24 in San Francisco Gotera, including 6 dead and 18 wounded, totaling 52 casualties, including dead and wounded.

The brave and bold participation of our insurrectional detachments and the active participation of the people in neighborhoods and towns was apparent during our large-scale operation.

The FMLN calls on our people to intensify efforts to promote our current task. We must get ready for the peoples rebellion. The defeat of the Christian Democratic regime and the formation of a new peoples democratic government are closer than ever.

[Word indistinct] and punishment for the murderers of El Mozote and El Sumpul. Against hunger and repression, let us all prepare for the rebellion. Long live "The People's Power, Strength, and Organization Lead The March Toward Rebellion Operation." Long live our new national campaign, "Everybody To Prepare the Rebellion." Revolution or death, we will win.

[Signed] FMLN General Command

Commanders Leonel Gonzalez, Roberto Roca, German Cienfuegos, Shafik Jorge Handal, and Joaquin Villalobos

[Issued in] El Salvador, 6 December 1988

FMLN Reports 27 Nov-4 Dec Attacks, Sabotage

PA0612134188 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Text] We will now summarize the FMLN actions carried out between 27 November and 4 December:

The FMLN inflicted a total of 266 Army casualties, including 2 sergeants, 3 corporals, 3 officers of the 1st Infantry Brigade, and 1 Atlacatl Battalion officer.

The FMLN destroyed El Roblar Military Base and [word indistinct] communications center atop Guazapa Hill. The FMLN also destroyed eight repeaters at that base. The FMLN destroyed eight communication repeaters, technical equipment, four military trucks, and one armored vehicle belonging to the 1st Infantry Brigade.

During clashes with the puppet Army, the FMLN seized 6 M-16 rifles, 1 M-14 carbine, 12 grenades for M-79 grenade launchers, 2 Claymore mine detonators, 6 complete military kits, 8 military backpacks, and large quantities of ammunition.

Regarding sabotage to the energy system, the FMLN destroyed 23 power poles, 1 tower, 3 telephone booths, and 12 transformers. The FMLN also attacked two important energy substations in San Salvador.

The FMLN also attacked La Esperanza coffee farm in Santa Ana. Among other sabotage actions in various parts of the country, the FMLN derailed one Salvadoran National Railroad engine.

Rebel, Army Nov Military Actions Summarized

PA0612134388 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Text] The Army has reported that it inflicted 208 guerrilla casualties during clashes in November. Meanwhile, the FMLN rebels have said they inflicted 991 casualties on the Army—including dead and wounded—as a result of their attacks, harassment, and ambushes during the same period.

The military report says 93 FMLN guerrillas were killed and 115 wounded as a result of nationwide counterinsurgency military operations during the month of November.

The report added that during the same period, the Army confiscated 105 high-caliber rifles, 2 M-60 machineguns, 20 revolvers of various calibers, more than 55,000 cartridges, 168 fragmentation grenades, 236 mines, 9 communication radios, and a large amount of material for homemade bombs.

The military report added that during the month of November, guerrillas killed 43 peasants, kidnapped 32, and caused the death of 6 people and crippled 23 others as a result of mine explosions.

In the war against public property—the pillar of a war economy—the military source reported that six mayorial offices and six National Administration for Telecommunications offices were damaged in various towns and six junction boxes were sabotaged.

In addition, 4 trains belonging to the Salvadoran National Railroad, FENADESAL, were blown up, and 10 vehicles and 5 buses were partially damaged.

Regarding damage to the electricity system, the FMLN knocked down 46 towers and 136 high-tension power poles and damaged 11 transformers.

FMLN Assails 'Doctors Without Borders' Group

PA0612150488 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 1400 GMT 4 Dec 88

[Text] The Doctors Without Borders organization notes an evil slanderous campaign against Salvadoran refugees in Honduras [words indistinct]. The Doctors Without Borders organization has been forced to withdraw from the Salvadoran refugee camps in Colomoncagua, Honduras, [words indistinct] engaged in an evil slanderous campaign against Salvadoran refugees. Recently, the local and foreign media published a report [words indistinct] saying the high level of organization of the refugee community is proof of their links with the FMLN. Nothing is more false than this. If you take a group of Salvadorans in the most remote and rural country in the world, you will see how quickly such a group organizes [words indistinct] and sets up arts and crafts shops, etc. [words indistinct]. The reduced amount of territory, the scarcity of natural resources, and poverty has forced Salvadorans to organize to survive [words indistinct].

Salvadoran refugees in Honduras live completely apart from the government; moreover, they escaped from the terror unleashed by the government. Therefore, the refugees by themselves have found many forms of communal organization to help each other in an atmosphere of true [words indistinct] by the government, where peasant communities have organized [words indistinct], which allows them to live with dignity under the minimum conditions.

The Salvadoran refugee community in Colomoncagua [passage indistinct] in other settlements. It is true, however, that the [words indistinct] Doctors Without Borders. The author of the report seems to be one of those writers paid by the CIA who are specialists in grey propaganda—that is, in writing slander based on real elements to reach false conclusions—who seeks to favor the U.S. and the Duarte government plans for forced repatriation based on slander.

We now will present a bulletin, a communique that the Salvadoran refugee community in Honduras has reported through the media. The following are excerpts of that bulletin:

From the Salvadoran refugee community in Honduras to all the local and foreign solidarity movements, ecumenical churches, humanitarian organizations, friendly governments, workers in the world, and people in general, we report the following:

In a report published on 16 November in the Honduran daily LA TRIBUNA, the agency Doctors Without Borders told the French daily LE MONDE that its withdrawal from the Salvadoran refugee camps in Colomoncagua, San Antonio, and Mesa Grande was a result of disagreements with the FMLN guerrillas, because the doctors had refused to provide medicine to the guerrillas. In view of these irresponsible and evil reports, our community clarifies that:

The Doctors Without Borders statements regarding their withdrawal from our camps and the rest of the statements made by this agency linking our communities with the FMLN guerrillas are completely false. Doctors Without Borders became in charge of the coordination of the health services at the refugee shelters in 1984, and for approximately 2 years it carried out outstanding work for the benefit of the community. After 1986, the criteria of this agency in the health services completely changed. The medicine supplied directly and the health personnel were significantly reduced. The amount of items provided was reduced from 36 to 8. Clinical equipment was seriously affected. However, when Doctors Without Borders withdrew from our camps, expired medicine and milk for children were found in their storerooms. They never wanted to distribute the milk.

In this bulletin, we want to recall the despicable and inhumane treatment these personnel gave to the community. Their lack of interest and willingness to care for the sick was noticeable. Their main work was to harass people who went for consultation through interrogations unrelated to the practice of medicine, without examining patients or giving any medical treatment.

The bulletin adds: We also remember honorable exceptions by doctors who did not follow this inhumane policy, and who were outstanding in their kind treatment to patients; however, because of the shortage of medicines, medical attention was not complete. We must note that in the aforementioned cases, these personnel remained at the camps for very brief periods of time.

The bulletin further adds that on 1 July 1988, a delegation of Doctors Without Borders came from Paris, headed by its president, [name indistinct], with the sole purpose of threatening us with the immediate withdrawal of Doctors Without Borders from our camps if we did not agree to the (?continuation) of such an humanitarian service.

The antihumanitarian nature of these people who want to hide their shameful actions at our camps—who are trying to conceal their actions to give supplies to the Nicaraguan contras, who are trying to defend a prestige

they no longer have for having sided with U.S. interests—is now being shown to the the world with their campaign against our refugees.

These kinds of statements, such as those recently made by Honduran Attorney General Leon Zepeda and Armed Forces Lieutenant Colonel Mario Henriquez Bocu, are the ones used by the Honduran Army to justify its repressive actions inside the camps.

Our community, the bulletin adds, will not cease reporting these kinds of disinformation campaigns seeking to justify repression.

Long live the struggle of the refugee community efforts to get humanitarian medical aid!

Community of Salvadoran Refugees in Honduras, 24 November 1988.

Nicaragua

Ortega on Denial of Visas, Bush Policy

PA0612215888 Managua Sistema Sandinista Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Report on news conference by President Daniel Ortega with unidentified reporters in Mexico City on 5 December; passages within quotation marks recorded]

[Text] Nicaragua has requested an urgent meeting of the UN committee on relations with the host country to discuss the U.S. decision to deny visas to President Daniel Ortega's delegation.

[Ortega] "[Words indistinct] thought that we worked toward that goal, so that I might travel to the United Nations today, not just to present a problem—namely, the damage done to our country by Hurricane Joan, which requires humanitarian aid from the international community, including the United States—but also to talk to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar about the agreement reached by the Central American presidents, through our foreign affairs ministers, regarding a proposal by the secretary general to devise a mechanism for verification—with the cooperation of Spain, Canada, the FRG, and the general secretary of the OAS—for the verification of security matters still pending under the terms of the Esquipulas agreements.

"I feel that after making progress here in Mexico, it is important to meet with the UN secretary general to get him to work out this proposal quickly so that the meeting of presidents can take place, since the secretary general's proposal practically becomes an essential element in the realization of a meeting of presidents, which would be held in San Salvador from 15 to 16 January. However, once again the United States, the U.S. Government, in an act that violates international legal order, in an act that violates its duties and obligations as host country, not only is violating these principles...[changes thought] In the OAS we have had problems with the United States, which has withheld recognition of our OAS representative and practically expelled him from the United States. I tried to travel to the United Nations in early October and limitations and obstacles were placed in our path regarding the members of the Nicaraguan delegation. Conditions were also placed affecting my movement in New York, limiting and restricting my mobility to an area of four residential areas so that I would be unable to visit the residence of the Nicaraguan ambassador to the United Nations, since it lies beyond the restricted area imposed by the U.S. Government.

"The worst part is that they [the U.S. Government] do this on the basis of U.S.-Nicaraguan bilateral agreements for the issuance of visas. We have a 15-day period in which to issue visas to U.S. officials who wish to travel to Nicaragua, and to Nicaraguan officials who wish to travel to the United States. We have that period limited to 15 days. Yet that concerns bilateral relations between the United States and Nicaragua. There is no reason for the United States to want to apply the very same mechanisms established for bilateral relations to a head of state's visit to the United Nations, which is an international organization. Not only has the United States applied this restrictive mechanism, but it has also denied visas to the press corps from various Nicaraguan media who were going to accompany me to the United Nations. Obviously, under these conditions, I cannot accept the rules that the United States wants to impose, because it would be tantamount to accepting the precedent that the host country of an international organization, in this case the United States, decides when, how, and who can accompany a head of state to the United Nations."

President Ortega also referred to those bilateral relations, but under the Bush administration.

[Ortega, in progress] "...period of direct intervention by U.S. troops in Central America, in Nicaragua, and in El Salvador. This is something we have denounced in a responsible manner. The United States has been making the necessary preparations, using Honduras as a staging ground to warm up its forces. Likewise, they have been creating a scheme to intervene in our country. We have pointed out that the weeks prior to Mr Bush's inauguration are weeks of high risk, because President Reagan might very well opt for a military escalation which includes the intervention of U.S. troops, thereby leaving a de facto problem for the new administration. Logically, this scheme would require the agreement of both political leaders."

"We cannot, of course, dismiss the possibility of this type of action in the case of Mr Bush, since Mr Bush has experienced the Reagan policy over the last several years and he knows that this policy failed. He can either decide to promote and support the negotiated settlement put forth by the Central American governments and the international community as a whole, or he can opt for a

direct intervention of U.S. forces; to continue the Reagan policy in its present form would consign U.S. policy to another 4 to 8 years of failure, along with the resultant political wear and tear on the United States."

[Unidentified reporter] "The reelection of former [Venezuelan] President Carlos Andres Perez [words indistinct] attitude with regard to Nicaragua. In other words, Carlos Andres Perez was at one time one of the people who contributed most to the triumph of the Sandinist revolution. One would assume, Mr President, that since he continues to be the Socialist International's president for Latin America and the Caribbean, President-elect Carlos Andres Perez [words indistinct] new attitude toward the Nicaraguan revolution?"

[Ortega] "Well, let me answer your question with the message I sent to Carlos Andres. I sent it to him last night from here in Mexico. I said to him: Dear friend, Latin America and the Caribbean are at a crossroads in their struggle for independence, self-determination, and sovereignty against those who insist on defending an economic order that violates our peoples' human rights. This explains the escalating disagreements of those who bear the burden of the foreign debt, which leads to increased unemployment, factory closures, restrictions on basic community services, increased infant mortality, and social and political tensions which have lead, in some cases, to expressions of mass revolutionary violence.

"This also accounts for the steadfastness and unrelenting fighting spirit of people like the Nicaraguans, who are unwilling to give in to the blackmail of a policy that tries to impose upon us the peace of cemeteries.

"Upon learning of your—our friend Carlos Andres—election to the Venezuelan presidency, we Nicaraguans celebrated the victory that will give new impetus to the actions demanded by the Latin America of Bolivar, Zapata, Marti, and Sandino, to help realize the unfinished dream of those who preceded us. We have made a sacred commitment to them. We must pursue their cause until victory is achieved, ensuring full and total democracy for the millions of men and women who have given their blood, sweat, and sacrifice for the real and authentic peace that dignifies and liberates men."

Ortega Discusses Regional, Domestic Stiuation

PA0612231488 Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 30 Nov 88 pp 1, 16

["Exclusive" interview with President Daniel Ortega by Enriqueta Cabrera during Ortega's visit to attend the inauguration of Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari; date and place not given]

[Text] [Cabrera] Mr President, Contadora will soon mark its 6th anniversary. Within its constant effort to contribute to peace in Central America, the most important achievement has been the signing of the Esquipulas II accord. However, there is currently a stalemate in negotiations and compliance with the accords. What is your assessment of the current situation?

[Ortega] Yes indeed, the accord we Central American presidents signed in Guatemala in August 1987 is, so to speak, the child born through the efforts of the Contadora and Support Groups, but especially the Contadora Group. The essence of the Contadora Group's proposal was the inspiration for the Esquipulas peace plan presented by President Arias. We could define the Esquipulas plan as a synthesis. This peace plan, which has raised great expectations, was discussed between December 1987 and January 1988 by the Verification Commission comprising the United Nations, OAS, and Contadora and Support Groups. The results were clear evidence of the Central American countries' efforts to comply with the plan; Nicaragua's effort stood out.

We later held a meeting in January in Costa Rica. Almost solely because of a report by the Contadora and Support Groups, certain countries decided to sign the Verification Commission's death sentence. This was a factor of great impact on the peace process. In the absence of a neutral verification instrument that had already been incorporated into the Central American peace effort—this was nothing new or foreign—the Central American countries became weaker and more susceptible [sensibles] to controvery and, above all, to U.S. pressure.

A void had been created. This explains why a meeting scheduled for August 1988, 1 year after the creation of Esquipulas, did not take place. Presidents Cerezo of Guatemala, Arias of Costa Rica, and I wanted the meeting to take place; the Honduran president did not. Salvadoran President Duarte's illness was the given excuse. A new meeting was scheduled to take place in El Salvador, but after the date had been set the Salvadoran Government decided to postpone the meeting without consulting other governments. In addition, Honduras said it would not take part in the meeting unless Nicaragua lifted its suit against Honduras at the International Court of Justice. These are the obstacles that have been raised since the plan's signing.

I believe the winner in this situation is President Reagan's policy. His policy is facing a Central America once again plagued by confrontation, where polemics among the various countries are increasing and where certain presidents are emerging as arbiters of whether or not the peace accords are advancing. Reagan's policy is facing a Central America that is opposing the creation of a verification mechanism, which is totally contrary to the spirit of the Esquipulas accord. The big losers are the Central American people, who want and demand peace.

I believe it is possible to reactivate the Central American dialogue in a circumspect and indirect manner here in Mexico. In other words, it is very positive that we Central American presidents will meet face to face to exchange views. I will work hard to have this group

decide on a date and propose this date to President Arias, who has been missed the most by the Central American officials attending the inauguration of Mr Carlos Salinas de Gortari. This is not merely a matter of protocol in Central American and Latin American countries; this ceremony goes beyond that. There are higher interests. We must remember that the Central American problem is a Latin American problem and that the core of the problem is its international economic relations: debt and trade problems.

There is some skepticism toward Latin American proposals dealing with the interests of countries to the north—particularly the United States—who, however, refuse to create new opportunities. We must take into account that at the Group of Seven meeting in Canada deaf ears were turned to France's proposal, and there was resistance by the United States, Great Britain, and the FRG toward accepting a stance toward Latin America.

I see the swearing-in of Mr Carlos Salinas de Gortari as a continuation of the tone set by the great meeting in Quito, which marked a new stage in Latin American dialogue. This is because Latin America is slowly struggling, in opposition to the aforementioned attitude, for convergence and for a pluralistic dialogue of Latin American countries. There has been a rapprochement; this could be clearly seen not only in the forming of the Group of Eight, but in Quito, where a meeting was held at President Rodrigo Borja's swearing-in that brought together Latin American representatives of different political and ideological persuasions. This included Fidel Castro, who was appearing on the Latin American scene after having been excluded from Latin America's most important dialogues.

I therefore see the swearing-in of Mr Carlos Salinas de Gortari as a continuation, as an affirmation, of this dialogue and of the Latin American trend toward strengthening its front by transcending the political differences and ideological differences we Latin Americans have. We are convinced that this convergence, this dialogue, is necessary to enable us to work for our common interests.

[Cabrera] Mr President, in a certain way Contadora started this new Latin American diplomacy. Then came the Support Group, the Group of Eight, and the Quito meeting. Do you think that in the last few years a new Latin American policy has emerged that substitutes Pan-Americanism for the decisive influence the United States had in the area?

[Ortega] I believe this has all been a process that has indeed become stronger, with certain ups and downs. In any case, the process has become stronger; Latin America is looking for its own profile, its own identity. It is addressing its most immediate problems that have limited the great undeveloped possibilities in human potential and natural resources. These resources and this potential remain undeveloped as a result of policies by those interested in keeping our countries and peoples impoverished.

This Latin American convergence that was first seen in Contadora and later expanded by the Group of Eight reached a new stage at the Quito meeting and now gathers continuity here in Mexico. It is a redefinition of Latin America along the lines to which you so correctly alluded.

[Cabrera] You mentioned that the Verification Commission was deactivated, thus weakening the negotiation process and Esquipulas II's momentum. What Latin American role should Contadora or the Group of Eight play in Central America to really improve the possibility of reaching solutions?

[Ortega] In the situation following the 7 August Esquipulas meeting, there was one factor that affected the sensitivities of certain Central American countries toward the forming of the International Verification Commission [CIV]. It was the commission's dictum on compliance with the peace plan in each Central American country. When we discussed at the meeting the composition of the Verification Commission, Nicaragua's position was that the CIV, comprising the United Nations, OAS, Group of Eight, and the five Central American foreign ministers, should have the cohesion to follow up on and arbitrate problems among the governments.

We worked on the principle that it was the responsibility of each government to address its domestic situation as far as complying with the spirit of the Esquipulas peace plan in accordance with the reality of each country. There was resistance from countries like Honduras and El Salvador, which resisted this and insisted that the commission should oversee everything. Once the commission issued its results, and these results did not speak so highly for the domestic situations in El Salvador and Honduras, these countries felt affected and thus reacted against the commission.

Thus, the position I want to convey to the Central American presidents with whom I will have the opportunity to speak is that, in principle, it is vital and essential to have a verification mechanism. However, this mechanism must address the actual problems between states so as not to give the impression that an international commission is interfering in the domestic affairs of each Central American country. I think this matter could be left to the respective Central American countries, which would then free them of any concern caused by the commission's findings.

One must take into account another element concerning bilateral issues between Honduras and Nicaragua. This idea, which has gained a certain amount of force, involves the establishment of a multinational force in the

Honduran-Nicaraguan border zone. I plan to talk to President Azcona about this, as part of a discussion on bilateral issues, so that we might give our support to this idea. A consensus exists, at least a spoken one, as both Honduras and Costa Rica agreed to this at the OAS meeting in El Salvador. Costa Rica supported the idea and Honduras, in turn, proposed to Nicaragua that a commission be established in the border zone comprising representatives from Canada, Spain, the FRG, and a Latin American country. Thus, there is a certain amount of consensus, at least verbally. What we are concerned with now is that steps should be taken to move ahead with the execution of this proposal, because it would provide security for the Honduras-Nicaragua border and avoid a military escalation, which the United States might be considering in the short term. It might even avoid an escalation, by way of direct intervention and participation of U.S. troops in a conflict under the pretext that they are defending Honduras from Nicaraguan aggression.

[Cabrera] The other day, press reports pointed out that President-elect Bush was interested in meeting with the Group of Eight. Do you feel it would be possible to make any suggestions to President-elect Bush concerning how best to make those talks fruitful and achieve peace in Central America?

[Ortega] I think I can talk to Argentine President Alfonsin, to Mr Salinas, and to Colombia's President Barco to reiterate the Nicaraguan position. Because we know the problems we are experiencing in the region, we will emphasize the seriousness of the current situation, which in Central America appears to be deteriorating. If a solution to the problem is not soon found, we will have U.S. troops in El Salvador or Nicaragua. This, consequently, will affect the entire region, along with all of Latin America.

In other words, Central America is experiencing an increasingly acute crisis. The Nicaraguan revolution has been gaining strength. The contras have been losing ground but are still an instrument of confrontation between Honduras and Nicaragua. Meanwhile, in El Salvador, the various versions of the revolutionary movement have developed, both on the military and mass movement fronts. Thus, the situation is much more serious than when Reagan took over. Reagan was faced with a Central America whose condition was far less serious than the one he is leaving it with. This shows that instead of providing solutions and achieving peace in Central America, Reagan's policies have exacerbated the regional conflict. After 8 years of pursuing a sustained policy against the Nicaraguan people and a policy of total support for the Salvadoran Government, Reagan is leaving behind a region that is hotter and in greater conflict without achieving any of his planned results.

Therefore, this is a thought we are interested in conveying to the Group of Eight and to all those governments interested in the region's problems. Given the announced meeting between Mr Bush and the Group of Eight, I believe this is valuable material to be considered in their conversations. Either we work seriously in favor of a solution in Central America or we will have more violence and a deterioration of the Central American crisis. Then we will have U.S. troops in Central America and the ensuing consequences for both the United States and the countries in the region.

[Cabrera] Could the meeting of Central American presidents be held before or after 20 January?

[Ortega] Well, we feel that the sooner this meeting is held the better. It is important that our Central American countries establish points of view that are independent of the U.S. Administration and, whatever these may be, that the current U.S. Administration and the new one respect the decisions made by the Central American presidents. That is what we Central Americans have to fight for. However, to subordinate, as it would seem, the meeting of presidents first to the election results and then to the inauguration of the new U.S. President runs counter to the interests that every Central American president should staunchly defend.

[Cabrera] Do you believe that the new U.S. President will change U.S. policy toward Central America? There has been talk of different shadings in policy. Do you believe there will be some substantial change in U.S. policy toward Central America that will be worthy of consideration?

[Ortega] One has to realize that Mr Bush is very familiar with the policy that President Reagan has defended so passionately. He knows the results of that policy, from which it will not be easy for him to extricate himself. A reasonable position would be to seek an honorable solution. To stick to the same policy that President Reagan followed would be unreasonable. We have no choice but to wait for Bush to take over as President of the United States to get a clear view of the path that Mr Bush is going to take. So far, the statements that he has made are not very encouraging, and events in Central America are even less encouraging. Thus, the prospects are bleak as a result of a polarization of the Central American conflict, which to the U.S. mind necessarily calls for an intervention by U.S. troops. Now then, is this the best thing for the U.S. and Central American people? That is the question that Mr Bush, being familiar with the policy, will have to ask himself.

[Cabrera] Turning to the internal situation, it is obvious that Nicaragua has to face many problems, the major one being this all-out war being waged by the contras. It is said that the situation has deteriorated. In your opinion, what is the situation in Nicaragua?

[Ortega] We are still defending a revolutionary power that has gradually acquired its own constitutional framework. It has gradually built that framework. That revolutionary task has been carried out successfully but at a very high cost to the Nicaraguan economy.

The social and economic effects of the war, the loss of Nicaraguan lives...[changes thought] There are over 54,000 victims of the war in Nicaragua and over $12 billion has been lost throughout these years of war. That is what our suit against the United States at the International Court of Justice is all about. The crisis was worsened by the effects of Hurricane Joan. It had devastating effects in the economic field. Nicaraguans must bear an economic and social burden. Because of those circumstances, some Nicaraguans resent their situation; without adopting an attitude that can be politically described as a counterrevolutionary attitude, they simply decide to leave the country. We educate experts at great cost and then they are taken to developed countries. In Nicaragua, the normal population migration is worsened by the current situation. We have many experts and cadres who are leaving Nicaragua, particularly for Canada. However, we have many experts and professionals who stay in their jobs, facing limitations and all the problems the current situation entails.

We have taken very strong economic measures to obtain a minimum of order while implementing a survival economy. With that economy we are supporting those sectors and areas that are vital for the Nicaraguan economy. We are concentrating our resources to attain a certain growth in other areas, especially in the social sector, whose development is seriously questioned.

[Cabrera] We understand that democracy has flourished in Nicaragua in recent years, but there are people who continue to state that there is no democracy in the country.

[Ortega] We are constantly being questioned on this subject, and the origin of this questioning is the United States, which is not satisfied with the revolution or with the democracy implemented by the revolution. Thus, there is clash between U.S. democracy, which is a Somoza-type democracy subordinated to U.S. interests, and the Sandinist democracy, which we have been implementing. As long as we continue to be threatened with U.S. intervention in its different forms—military, economic, etc.—the opposition groups are encouraged to demand that the government dismantle the revolution's democracy and implement the type of democracy favored by the United States. That is to say, a democracy subordinated to U.S. policies without sovereignty or independence and a Nicaragua subjected to the economic power groups that traditionally have subjugated it.

Logically, the Nicaraguan revolution cannot accept this. There is a process to constitutionalize the democratic system in Nicaragua and it has been gaining greater strength and shape. Pluralism exists, as was clearly shown in the 1984 elections and the fact that there are seven parties in our National Assembly. This is unprecedented in Nicaragua's history because in the past only two parties held seats and participated in elections.

In other words, the opportunities have been gradually emerging despite the war. These opportunities are continuing to expand. We have a press that is an enemy of the revolution, that is financed and guided by the North Americans, and that expresses itself in that direction every day; it does so without any type of censorship. We wage a political and ideological struggle against that press. Of course, we do not have the degree of political stability we would like to have. But this is caused by the situation of armed confrontation that exists in Nicaragua and the U.S. aggression. To the extent that we can overcome this situation, we will have in Nicaragua a truly stable democratic system. We cannot talk of stability under the current circumstances.

[Cabrera] Mr President, taking more of your time, we would like to ask you a final question. What is the situation regarding Nicaragua's relations with Mexico? What are the prospects for this relationship?

[Ortega] Relations between Mexico and Nicaragua have been very stable. Mexico's role in Central America has been very important. We must remember that Mexico was the starting point for the creation of the Contadora Group and that it is aware of the need for peace in Central America. I think we have to concentrate all efforts so that Mexico, along with the Contadora Group and the Group of Eight, will increase efforts in the direction of Central American peace.

Opposition Demands Changes to Recent Laws

PA0612011588 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 1 Dec 88 pp 1, 12

[Unattributed report]

[Text] The 14 opposition political parties and civic groups today issued a statement demanding that the Sandinist government amend its recently approved laws. The opposition parties and organizations believe that these laws consolidate the FSLN's hold on power.

Part of the document issued by the Group of 14, comprised of opposition political parties, civic organizations, and the Permanent Workers Congress, CPT, states:

The undersigned political parties, organizations, and labor unions—in light of the very serious crisis being experienced by the Nicaraguan people, which has them on the verge of an unprecedented catastrophe of unknown consequences and which is mainly due, among other things, to the misgovernment of the FSLN and its crazy dictatorial, totalitarian plans, which oppose every democratization process as established in the Esquipulas II agreements—have reached the following conclusions:

We declare:

1. Instead of contributing to the country's democratization, the recently-approved Municipalities Law, Electoral Law, Emergency Law, and Amparo Law help

consolidate the system of state-Army-party rule and perpetuate the FSLN's dictatorship through electoral fraud and by taking advantage of the people's inability to defend themselves against abuse of power and institutionalized violence.

2. Without amendments to these laws and the Constitution, which are demanded by the opposition, the minimum conditions allowing democratic parties to participate in any electoral process staged by the Sandinist Government are nonexistent.

3. Repression of political and labor groups and constant violations of human rights and public liberties are unavoidable obstacles to this participation.

4. The constitutional and legal amendments mentioned here and the elimination of obstacles are essential if the Sandinist government is to comply with the Esquipulas II accords. We basically support such accords but, as we pointed out in a document containing the conclusions of a symposium on these accords held on 5 and 6 August this year, they must be revitalized and redefined by taking into consideration the demands of the domestic civilian opposition.

5. In view of this, and the fact that to implement the constitutional amendments we are demanding such amendments must be approved both by the current National Assembly—whose term ends on 21 December—and by the next National Assembly, we declare that the government should not call elections unless the current Assembly approves the amendments.

6. We also declare that if the current Assembly does not approve the amendments, the peaceful option of a political solution to the Nicaraguan problem will be limited to the replacement of the Sandinist government as soon as possible through means authorized by the Constitution.

7. We have agreed to stay united in this peaceful struggle. We urge other political and social groups and all the Nicaraguan people to immediately join this struggle with the firm determination to achieve peace through democracy, justice, and liberty. With this purpose in mind, we will proceed in due time to appoint a commission to promote the creation of a sole bloc comprising the entire spectrum of the Nicaraguan sociopolitical opposition.

8. We demand the solidarity and effective support of all peoples and governments of America and the international community in this peaceful struggle of all the Nicaraguan people.

Honduran Army 'Harassed' Murupuchi Post

PA0712021288 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 6 Dec 88 p 2

[Text] Continuing their provocations, Honduran Army troops on 3 December harassed the EPS observation post in Murupuchi, 4 km north of Teotecacinte, Nueva Segovia Department, by firing two 81-mm mortar rounds at the post. This was reported yesterday in an official Defense Ministry bulletin.

Ortega Greets Albania's Alia on National Day

AU0612144288 Tirana ZERI I POPULLIT in Albanian 1 Dec 88 p 3

[Telegram from Daniel Ortega Saavedra, president of the Republic of Nicaragua, to Ramiz Alia, chairman of the Presidium of the People's Assembly of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania]

[Text] On the occasion of the 44th anniversary of the liberation of the People's Socialist Republic of Albania, in the name of the Sandinista National Liberation Front and the Government and people of Nicaragua, I convey best wishes to the superb Albanian people. The celebration of the traditional festival of the Albanian people is another opportunity to express the feelings of the Nicaraguan people toward them, feelings that have been forged in the common struggle for freedom, independence, and self-determination.

I express the conviction that the fraternal ties between our peoples will be strengthened in the common struggle against American imperialism, for peace, and for the economic and social progress of our peoples.

Fraternal greetings.

Panama

Daily on U.S.-Argentina-Panama Relations

PA0612154288 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 6 Dec 88 pp 1, 6

[Article by Roberto R. Rodriguez: "Maisto and McGee Devise Plan Against Panama"]

[Text] Two intelligence agents in the U.S. Embassy's diplomatic personnel have delivered a document drafted by that mission to several opposition legislators instructing them to stir up trouble in Panamanian-Argentine relations.

Progovernment legislator Luis Gomez raised the charge after an opposition legislator read the plan to the plenum of the Legislative Assembly and made a political analysis that, according to Gomez, clearly reflects the CIA's intention to pursue a strategy "to endanger the neutrality of the Panama Canal." Argentina is a signatory of the neutrality pact signed in 1977.

According to Gomez, the telltale document was drafted by two fellows called Maisto and McGee, both of whom are disinformation strategists and specialists in psychological warfare working in offices located in the building housing the U.S. diplomatic mission.

According to a government source, the new strategy follows foreign policy guidelines aimed at inverting the Panamanian people's nationalist set of values at any cost, gaining advantages, and obtaining a renegotiation of the Torrijos-Carter treaties that will ensure the presence of U.S. military bases and troops beyond the year 2000.

Argentina and its government provided important backing in rejecting the aggressive attempts by Messrs George Shultz and Vernon Walters to organize a U.S. armed intervention in Panama that would be backed by what the State Department described as "an action with allies in the region."

During the Malvinas war, Panama became a solidaristic and strategic defender of Argentina after it was discovered the Argentines were losing the war through Galeta Island, an electronics center used by the United States to spy and relay intelligence information to Great Britain against the Latin American region, represented by Argentina.

Argentine Foreign Minister Dante Caputo, who is also UN General Assembly president, relayed to Foreign Minister Jorge Ritter by telephone from New York a communication refuting "inaccurate and slanted" reports by the Panamanian opposition aimed at implicating Panama in the military uprising that took place in Argentina over the weekend.

Caputo dismissed the sensationalist reports and thanked the Panamanian Government and people for their demonstrations of solidarity with that southern democracy.

PCC's Gianelli 'Incites Civil Disobedience'

PA0612130388 Panama City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 4 Dec 88 pp 1-A, 8-A

[Unattributed article: "Gianelli Incites Civil Disobedience"]

[Text] Statements made by William Gianelli, president of the board of directors of the Panama Canal Commission [PCC], constitute an open, cynical, and brutal incitement to civil disobedience by Panamanian PCC employees.

The statement, presumably made to the DPA news agency, was published in a newspaper yesterday morning and is nothing but an attempt to promote a confrontation between Panamanian PCC employees and Panamanian authorities, with Gianelli offering the employees "his total support during the political crisis Panama is suffering."

Gianelli is shamelessly attempting to promote the international image that "the Panamanian Government is to be blamed for what has happened," saying that the "interoceanic waterway" should be excluded from political problems.

The fact is that the U.S. Government has turned the Panama Canal administration into an area of conflict because of the measures adopted against Panama's sovereign interests, including the retention of deductions from the Panamanian employees' salaries, which should be turned over the the Finance and Treasury Ministry to pay Social Security quotas and income, property, education, and other taxes.

In response to this fiscal aggression, the Panamanian Government, in keeping with the laws of the Republic, has proceeded to adopt appropriate measures to ensure payment of those taxes.

In his statement inciting the Panamanian employees to disobedience, Gianelli said "The PCC is prepared to temporarily house employees if they are barred [embargadas] from their homes." He also offered them "reimbursement for loss of their properties." It is obvious, therefore, that this is an attempt to bribe the Panamanian employees into perpetrating violent actions. It is an offer to compensate them economically for participating in actions against public order.

Meanwhile, LA REPUBLICA feels Gianelli's statement is an open violation of Article 5 of the Canal Treaty, which refers to the principle of nonintervention.

Article 5 establishes that "U.S. PCC employees, their dependents, and U.S. contractors designated by the PCC will respect the laws of the Republic of Panama and will abstain from any activity incompatible with the spirit of the treaty." Consequently, "They will abstain from any political activity in the Republic of Panama or from intervening in the country's internal afairs." The United States will adopt every measure within its power to ensure the fulfillment of this article.

Shultz-Bechtel Ties in CEAC Contract Viewed

PA0612164288 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 1645 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Station commentary]

[Text] In a prominent spot on its front page today, LA ESTRELLA DE PANAMA published Panamanian Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Maria Cabrera Jovane's strong reply to the vicious lies that had previously been sent to the same newspaper by a self-styled public relations adviser at the U.S. Embassy in Panama regarding the problems currently faced by the Canal Alternative Studies Commission, CEAC. The CEAC, composed—as is well known—of U.S., Japanese, and Panamanian representatives, must fulfill the delicate task of contracting one of the vying consortiums for the study.

Is just so happens that the consortium leading in the bids is composed, among other companies, of the Bechtel [name indistinct] Inc. This company is part of the Bechtel Group, a powerful U.S. consortium that builds large-scale infrastructure projects, especially in Third World countries. Its executive manager is none other than Mr George Shultz, whose days as secretary of state in the Reagan administration are numbered.

The urgency of meeting this deadline explains the increasingly tough pressures exerted by Mr Shultz' subordinates at the U.S. Embassy in Panama and in the CEAC so the contract in question can be signed, thus violating the procedures agreed upon by the countries that compose the CEAC.

The obvious conflict of interests between Bechtel and the state secretariat has been reported more than once by prestigious Panamanian and Latin American newspapers, but it was not until today that the responsible parties issued an explanation or denial. In fact, the connection between the crude tactics used by Mr Shultz and his subordinates in Panama, and the multimillion-dollar figures involved in the study and execution of any alternative to the Panama Canal, cannot be more obvious.

For Panama, the issue is very delicate. The influence of the interoceanic waterway—which crosses our country for the world's benefit—on our economic, social, and political life is more than well known. The situation becomes even more serious when we consider that one of the problems associated with executing the alternatives that are being studied is the evaluation of their impact on Panama's environment, the consequences of which would be especially felt by future generations. It is understandable for Bechtel's executive manager and his local slaves to long for the times of the Hay-Buneau Varilla Treaty, in which Panama's only task was to surrender its rights for the exclusive benefit of foreign interests. The present time, however, is a time for executing the decolonization program that constitutes the essence of the Torrijos-Carter treaties, upon whose strict fulfillment the isthmus' stability depends, and which is essential in guaranteeing the benefits of the normal and efficient functioning of any interoceanic waterway that may cross our territory. The intention of reforming these treaties for the exclusive benefit of the United States is tied in with the prepotency of the Bechtel executive manager's employees and the U.S. Government, whose post of state secretary is occupied by Mr Shultz. No other name could be more adequate under these circumstances than the surname Kneebone [U.S. diplomat in Panama]—knee bone—to illustrate the enthusiasm with which U.S. Embassy employees in Panama accept the task of subordinating their country's public institutions to the interests of a powerful private company, thus hindering relations between the two countries and their people.

The dignity that characterizes Panamanian foreign policy cannot accept such terms in our relations with the United States. Deputy Foreign Minister Cabrera's letter thus joins other initiatives that have reiterated to the world our demand for respect for Panama and its people's fundamental rights and our determination to resist all forms of intervention and all pressures aimed at undermining those rights. The inability of Bechtel and the State Department to understand these types of values—which they evidently lack—is one of the basic reasons for the aggression that has led Panamanian-U.S. relations to their lowest point since Panamanians were murdered by U.S. troops in January 1964. It is not with knee bones but by standing tall that the Panamanians must defend their sacred national interests. Understanding this basic fact is the essential starting point for any agreement between Panama and the United States.

U.S. Official Reportedly in Country Illegally

PA0512160488 Panama City MATUTINO in Spanish 5 Dec 88 p 5

[From "Confidential Report" column by Roberto R Rodriguez]

[Text] The so-called Terence Patella [Rotula]—or Kneecap [Hueso de Rodilla]—is a Filipino-American who is in our country without appropriate documents, according to the Foreign Ministry. [name refers to U.S. official Terrence Kneebone]

Assembly Approves Trade Agreement With USSR

PA0612184288 Panama City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 4 Dec 88 p 8-C

[Text] The Panamanian Legislative Assembly this week approved an agreement that creates commercial ties between Panama and the USSR on the basis of equal and reciprocal advantages. The agreement was submitted to the Legislative Assembly by Foreign Minister Jorge Ritter, who said "This agreement negotiated between the two countries will contribute to strengthening the ties between Panama the USSR."

The bill submitted by Minister Ritter, on behalf of the executive branch, had been approved by the cabinet earlier. The judicial document is entitled: "Bill for the Approval of a Trade Agreement Between the Republic of Panama and the USSR Signed on 8 October 1988."

The document is of a general nature and serves as a reference for the negotiation of products to be included in the agreement. A mixed commission has already been appointed to study this matter.

Ritter explained that because each country has a different legal system, the agreement establishes the procedures to be followed when carrying out trade negotiations, establishing prices for imported goods, payment in free convertible currency, financing, and transportation. Foreign Minister Ritter said diplomatic representatives of the two countries will have to reach an agreement on those points prior to the implementation of the agreement. According to the same document, the two parties—Panama and the USSR—will commit themselves to cooperate and participate in this trade agreements. The agreement also includes the right to organize exhibits in the host country. The appropriate authorities will establish the conditions under which the exhibits can be organized.

Labor Party To Withdraw From Democratic Union
PA0612173188 Panama City Circuito RPC in Spanish 1706 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Ramon Sieiro, general secretary of the Labor Party [PALA], announced a short while ago at a news conference that PALA will withdraw from the National Democratic Union [UNADE] on 7 February 1989.

At the news conference Sieiro also proposed an alliance with another political party, hinting that such an alliance could be with the Authentic Panamenist Party. He also called for (?primary) elections on 15 February, and stressed the need to reopen the closed media.

Communique Issued
PA0712033888 Panama City LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 6 Dec 88 p3

[Communique issued by the National Executive Council of the Labor Party in Panama City; date not given]

[Text] The Labor Party (PALA) announces to the national community that the so-called UNADE [National Democratic Union] alliance has come to an end. The commitment assumed by PALA through a mandate from our national convention of February 1984 is about to end and cannot go beyond 7 February 1989, the date on which all parties must have officially nominated their candidates for the 7 May elections.

Therefore, 1 month after the beginning of the electoral process, PALA declares that the UNADE has completed its tasks as a political alliance. PALA is only issuing a reminder that UNADE has reached its end. We will continue to be part of the government until PALA joins a new political alliance.

WHAT THIS ALLIANCE SHOULD BE LIKE:

Therefore, in the event of a new alliance, we make the following clarifications:

In Panama, political alliances, formed by the government as well as by the opposition, have traditionally served political purposes.

PALA categorically rejects any alliance whose aims are solely electoral.

1. PALA demands that the parties that form a given alliance must express their willingness to fight during the 1989-1994 period for the implementation of a minimum program. All parties in this alliance must vow to work together to reach the common goals expressed in that program.

2. PALA believes that a new alliance must be based on respect among the parties, a general will to abide by that which has been agreed upon; that is, each party's loyalty toward the alliance and a promise to set aside arrogance as a pattern and method for interparty relations.

3. A list of three candidates for president must be drafted following a selection based on an analysis of the candidate and his party.

The goals of the alliance must be taken into consideration when the list of three candidates is drafted. PALA will obviously be interested in the popularity, background, and acceptance in the community of the candidates and their parties. PALA will be especially strict and demanding when it comes to the selection of the main candidate and the acceptance that his party currently has.

4. No party can do without the others because no party can win by itself in an election. Parties must act together. This is the importance of assessing the specific status of each party in the voter's eye. This is the importance of assessing the voters' view of each party.

5. The purpose of the alliance cannot be—and if it is, PALA members will not accept it—TO MAINTAIN THE HEGEMONY OF ONE PARTY OR GROUP OVER THE OTHERS. The parties must work to obtain the victory of a cause, a political plan, and a great alliance to make changes and rectifications, to defend social conquests, to continue the path of a nationalist struggle for the country's liberation, and to meet the needs of most Panamanians who want a democracy that we will only attain with the help of all sectors.

6. The results of the last election as well as the subsequent development and outlook of each party that will make up the alliance must be considered. There are reliable means and methods to decide the degree of acceptance and popularity each party has. If we do not make an overall evaluation, we are running the risk of not giving the needed electoral and planned support to the future alliance.

7. Therefore, the PALA feels the Panamanian electorate cannot continue to listen passively to the remarks of different leaders regarding what party should be at the head of the presidential slate. The Panamanian who votes will in the end play the most important role. He must decide what party will lead the three-candidate presidential ticket.

Panamanians no longer want to be mere spectators of such important decisions for the future of the country.

Interpreting the deeply felt wishes of the Panamanian electorate, the PALA is suggesting to all of the country's political parties the following work schedule to decide ahead of time the official candidates for the various electoral offices:

1. The alliances of the political parties that will participate in the elections of 7 May 1989 must be established by 31 December 1988 at the latest. Throughout December, we will promote talks to that effect.

2. Once the political alliances have been established, we deem it appropriate to consult with the national electorate in primary elections to be held on 15 January 1989. These primaries will decide what party must head the presidential slate.

We want the Panamanian people to make this decision freely and democratically. We want to break the traditional patterns of imposing handpicked parties.

3. HOW WILL THE ELECTIONS PROCEED?

The primary elections will take place in the capitals of the provinces. All Panamanians over 18 who have their identity cards and whose names appear in the preliminary electoral registry can vote.

WHO WILL BE THE POLL WATCHERS?

The poll watchers will be appointed by the diverse political parties. The rest of the necessary rules will be agreed upon by consensus among the parties.

4. DOES THE ELECTORAL COURT REQUIRE THIS?

Although the primary elections are not a requirement established in the Electoral Code, we do feel they would contribute to enhance the elections and to strengthen our democratic system.

5. We want the views of the people of Panama on who should head the presidential ticket to be known.

In conclusion, let the national conventions of the political parties be the ones to choose the best candidate.

The PALA will today and always respect the sovereign decision of the Panamanian people to choose the government we deserve.

The PALA, with its new ideas, continues to be the alternative of the people of Panama

[Signed] The National Executive Council
Juan Medrano, president
Ramon Sieiro, secretary general
Jose A. Alessandria, vice president
Jack Cardoze, deputy secretary general

Argentina

Seineldin Orders Mutinous Leader To Surrender

PY0612204588 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0804 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Mercedes, Buenos Aires Province, 6 Dec (TELAM)—Major Hugo Reinaldo Abete, who a few days ago took over the 6th Infantry Regiment based in Mercedes, today confirmed that a new chief will assume the command of that military unit.

Abete talked to journalists from TELAM and other media by telephone a few minutes after 0500 GMT.

At that time, journalists near the unit were invited to enter the regiment. Once inside, they were taken to an office where an officer placed them before a telephone which was apparently linked to another office inside the military unit. Through this telephone they heard (and recorded) Major Abete's statement.

Abete said he does not know who will take command of the unit, nor when that change will take place. He did not reject the possibility that the new commander will assume his post in the morning. He said that General Caceres will probably be present. On 4 December, an Army staff communique reported that Gen Caceres is in charge of normalizing the rebel units.

Abete added that he had been instructed by Colonel Seineldin to end the mutiny and to comply with Gen Caceres' orders.

Journalists could not see Abete at any time nor were they able to establish whether Abete was inside the regiment or not. However, all journalists identified Abete's voice.

The situation in the unit appeared to be normal. There were three armed guards at the door, but their faces were not painted black. There were no other security measures implemented.

Seineldin Held in Buenos Aires

PY0612130888 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1247 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Dec (TELAM)—The Army staff has reported that Colonel Mohamed Ali Seineldin is under arrest in a military unit of the Buenos Aires garrison, at the disposal of military judge No 29, Colonel Jorge Covacivich, retired, who is in charge of the corresponding investigations.

The Army staff added that all of the Armed Forces members involved in the Villa Martelli events are in the posts to which they have been assigned by the Army staff.

Taken to Support Directorate

PY0612133188 Buenos Aires Telam in Spanish 1302 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Dec (TELAM)—Colonel Mohamed Ali Seineldin was transferred today by 1st Armored Cavalry Brigade Commander General Isidro Caceres to the Support Directorate Headquarters (formerly the 1st Army Headquarters), located in the Palermo neighborhood.

After reconsidering his stance, Seineldin was taken to that unit, where he will remain at the disposal of the military courts. It is not known whether he is being held incommunicado.

The leader of the military insurrection arrived at the military unit dressed in combat fatigues.

Gen Caceres Concludes 'Task' in Villa Martelli

PY0612131888 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1306 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Dec (DYN)—The Army has reported that today at noon General Isidro Bonifacio Caceres, commander of the 1st Armored Cavalry Brigade based in Tandil, "concluded" his task of reorganizing the Villa Martelli rebel unit. It added that Caceres has ressumed his specific duties.

The official Army communique states: "Gen Caceres has concluded the tasks he was instructed to carry out in Villa Martelli by the Army chief of staff. He has now resumed his activities at the 1st Armored Cavalry Brigade."

Alfonsin Claims No Negotiations With Rebels

PY0612133688 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1315 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Dec (TELAM)—President Raul Alfonsin said today that there were no negotiations carried out to solve the military crisis, which some sectors unleashed to undermine the people's sovereignty and national institutions. The president said that no negotiations were carried out, that no preconditions of any sort were agreed upon, and that there was no arrogance. [sentence as received]

Alfonsin made this statement at the Banco Nacion building where he headed the opening of the 32d CONINAGRO [Agriculture-Livestock Intercooperative Confederation] ordinary assembly.

Alfonsin Adresses Coninagro on Military Crisis

PY0612214688 Buenos Aires Argentina Televisora Color Network in Spanish 1403 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Speech by President Raul Alfonsin to 32d General Assembly of the Agricultural-Livestock Intercooperative Confederation on 6 December at State Bank Building in Buenos Aires—recorded]

[Text] [in progress] ... I would also like to thank CONINAGRO [Agricultural-Livestock Intercooperative Confederation] for what it has done, as I have already said,

for democracy. I am not referring to any particular action but to its permanent support because, by definition, cooperatives are based on democracy. We have always received the support of their leaders whenever democracy has been jeopardized. This support was reiterated during the latest events.

As you know, an incident took place in our country while I was abroad, while I was addressing the representatives of the world, who applauded Argentine democracy. This incident took place while I was seeking support for the essential changes necessary because of the problems that affect the South, particularly Latin America and Argentina, in connection with the international economic order, the foreign debt, and world trade. This incident, which took place while I was meeting the future U.S. leaders, has shaken not only Argentina but the world at large, which has categorically expressed its solidarity with us.

Because I was abroad, the first measures were taken by Vice President Victor Martinez, who acted with his usual loyalty and ability. Yet when I arrived, we had to take further action. Today we are going through the final stage of an incident that has once again shown that the majority of the Argentine Armed Forces are at the service of the Constitution and the nation. This incident has also shown that we Argentines have united, despite our differences, in the service of democracy and freedom.

Yet there are some wolves who seem to be disguised as sheep, who seem to be sad because a solution without bloodshed could be found. We should really thank God that we could solve this problem without the deaths of hundreds of Argentines, which would have been a burden for our generation and for generations to come.

It is really dangerous to seek to distort what we have experienced—to try to reap political benefits from an incident that, instead of being used to divide people, should convince Argentines that we must join efforts to strengthen our achievements.

We can certainly say that this ceremony is a symbol of our achievements. In fact, today you will pass judgement on your leaders, and your leaders, as the president of CONINAGRO has said, will pass judgement on the leaders of the nation. Our accomplishments will be acknowledged, our faults will be criticized, and the solutions will be proposed. This is what we Argentines want for us and for our children.

We therefore welcome a dialogue that lasted more than 2 hours and allowed us to avoid a battle, even a 5-minute battle, which would have claimed Argentine lives.

Through this dialogue it was possible to convince and persuade. The dialogue was long because no precondition was accepted. That is the real issue, and all Argentines should know it.

Unrest has been troubling the Armed Forces, and only a fool could have ignored it. There is a type of unrest which is common to all Armed Forces. Unrest has been prompted by concern over equipment, budget, and salaries. These are problems caused by the economic crisis which is affecting the nation, and which has resulted in the crisis about which we have just heard. Everyone is aware of this. The executive branch is, and was, aware of it. Within the framework of the economic difficulties it seeks, and has sought, to find some sort of solution. This concern, which is shared by everyone, is only logical. There is another reason for this national concern. This is a matter of feelings. It is just that each member of the Armed Forces wants to be regarded by society as an individual who has decided to take a definite step to defend society. There is an even greater concern over the need to recognize actions taken against subversion. We have decided to let the judicial branch, which is the appropriate national institution, judge this problem. This branch will handle the case unless the society as a whole decides otherwise. Although this concern is generally understandable, some of the serious mistakes that were committed must not go unpunished.

One must admit that there was a struggle. This struggle almost became a war deemed necessary to recover the institutions of the nation. One cannot ignore the judgements passed by society and by the courts that have acted in keeping with the institutions of the nation, and in keeping with the Constitution. The court will continue to act without the interference of the executive branch.

There is another issue which is not a common denominator and of which you should be aware. Not all the Argentine Armed Forces members share the attitude of some messianic groups, such as those that caused the recent problems, that pretend to play what they regard as a historical role. This is not so because it does not reflect San Martin's spirit of a Praetorian Gurard for the nation. This spirit was probably tolerated within the Army in the past in order to fight a concept, the concept of subversion. Some doctrines were adopted that gradually evolved into fundamentalist and messianic ideals that have nothing to do with the traditions and behavior or the long-standing honor of the Armed Forces. This is where the great, fundamental, difference lies. This is why I fully agree with the CONINAGRO president who has just said that one cannot use the excuse that actions are taken to control internal problems. What is sought here, in one way or another, is to attack the sovereignty of the people and the institutions of the nation. This is what we have prevented, this is what we have stopped from happening, without any negotiations, without any conditions, and, obviously, without any arrogance. [applause]

As I said a while ago, it is important that the nation as a whole, the Argentine people as a whole, the women and men of our fatherland, regardless of their social status, their work, their place in society, or their political beliefs, were ready to defend the institutions—including, of course, the great majority of the Argentine Armed Forces.

Our path has already been set. Today, Mr President, you end your administration. Next year I will have the pleasure of once again greeting you and, on that occasion, it will be my turn to say goodbye. Once again it will be the turn of democracy for all Argentine people. [applause]

Israeli Government Congratulates Alfonsin

PY0712001688 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2055 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Dec (TELAM)—The Government of Israel has congratulated President Raul Alfonsin on the triumph of Argentine democracy, which over the past few days was again put to test over the crisis.

Israeli Ambassador to Buenos Aires Ephraim Tari this afternoon sent to the Foreign Ministry a telegram addressed to Foreign Minister Dante Caputo, signed by Shimon Peres, Israeli acting prime minister and minister of foreign affairs.

The telegram reads as follows: It is a pleasure for me to extend through you to President Raul Alfonsin my congratulations and those of the Israeli Government; Argentine democracy, which over the past few days has again been put to the test, has successfully overcome the crisis.

Rico Held at Camet Regiment, Mar Del Plata

PY0612172088 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1630 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Mar del Plata, 6 Dec (TELAM)—Military unit sources have reported that former Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico is being held at the 601 Air Defense Artillery Group in Camet.

The same sources added that Rico has been held in Camet since last weekend, when he was transferred from the Magdalena prison.

Activities in this Air Defense Group today were normal. It was established that there were the usual number of guards and that the usual number of conscripts were on leave.

3 Rightists Arrested Over Villa Martelli Riots

PY0612223888 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2101 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Dec (TELAM)—San Isidro Federal Judge Alberto Daniel Piotti has confirmed that three people are under arrest in connection with incidents last Sunday during the military uprising in Villa Martelli.

Carlos Garcia, Luis Alberto Campomasi, and Gerardo Jose Centeno Growley were arrested by personnel of the Superintendency for Internal Security. The following weapons were seized from these people, who were arrested at the intersection of Gazcon and Corrientes Streets: a .32-caliber revolver, two silencers for .22-caliber pistols, and an AE-5 Spanish grenade.

Although no information has been released on this case, reliable sources have stated that the three arrested men are members of an ultrarightist group.

Former Army Captains Arrested Trying To Flee

PY0612225188 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2211 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Buenos Aires, 6 Dec (TELAM)—A few minutes before 2000 [2200 GMT] the Defense Ministry reported on the capture of two former Army captains whose capture had been ordered following the Monte Caseros rebellion earlier this year.

The Defense Ministry communique states:

The Defense Ministry reports that the Argentine Naval Prefecture has captured former Army Captains Emilio Pedro Morello and Ernesto Larramendi in the area of Puerto Pilcomayo. They were trying to flee to Paraguay.

The capture of both of them had been ordered by Military Judge Lieutenant Colonel de la Serna for the crimes of abandoning their posts and rebellion during the Monte Caseros incident. For these crimes they were discharged from the Army.

Bolivia

President Reshuffles Armed Forces Leaders

PY0612140988 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 1130 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] President Victor Paz Estenssoro unexpectedly decided to reshuffle the Armed Forces High Command and remove two of its members. The minister secretary general of the presidency has read the decree which changed the organizational chart of the military high command. This decree states:

Whereas:

The president of the nation and captain general of the national Armed Forces is entitled to appoint the military high command, in keeping with the provisions of Article 96/18/19 of the national Constitution and Article 33, paragraph A, of the Armed Forces charter;

The president of the nation decrees:

The following citizens are hereby appointed to the following posts:
Army General Edwin Peredo Camacho as commander in chief of the Armed Forces;
Army General Romulo Mercado Garnica as commander in chief of the Army;
Air Force General Guillermo Escobar Urhy as commander in chief of the Air Force;
Rear Admiral (Alberto Saenz Bunsi) as commander in chief of the Navy.

As you can see, General Jorge Rodriguez Bravo and Admiral Douglas Estremadoiro Garcia have been replaced. Until yesterday, the former was commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and the latter was commander in chief of the Navy.

The new Armed Forces Commander in Chief, Gen Edwin Peredo Camacho has stated that the Armed Forces are doing their best to strengthen the nation. He said that under the present circumstances, the nation requires from all its citizens, self-denial, participation, and patriotism.

Gen Peredo explained that the changes in the Armed Forces High Command will not hamper the attainment of objectives that will benefit the Armed Forces and the country. He said that the Armed Forces, an essential component of the state, are writing outstanding pages of Bolivian history by sharing the burden of the nation's effort with true soldier spirit.

He added that the Armed Forces are not concerned with pre-electoral activities because they are involved in their own specific duties. In his opinion, the pre-electoral state is something for politicians and the Armed Forces have nothing to do with it.

Gen Peredo went on to say that the role of the Armed Forces is very well known. Thus, they will continue working to build up internal strength and further the country's development.

Bolivian Defense Minister Alfonso Revollo Thenier has stated that the president is acting within his rights in reshuffling the Armed Forces High Command. He added that the president has decided to entrust the post of Armed Forces commander in chief to the Army after the Air Force held the post for 2 years. He explained that the Navy is a relatively new institution. Thus, it has not been given the privilege of participating in the rotation. However, he said that it would be up to the next president to decide whether the Navy will rotate through the position of Armed Forces commander in chief in the future.

The minister added that the Armed Forces fully guarantees the upcoming elections and will give their support to the president who is elected. He reaffirmed that unity prevails in the Armed Forces and that the continued strengthening of the democratic system and turning over of power to the new president is assured.

Revollo reiterated that the Armed Forces were prepared to support the next president of the nation and the freedom that prevails in the country. He denied the rumors about a breach of discipline in a batallion headquartered in Sucre, which allegedly gave shelter to former President Luis Garcia Meza Tejada. There has been no breach of discipline in the Armed Forces, he said, adding that he will continue working as before, complying with the provisions of the national Constitution.

Peruvian Military Attache Killed in La Paz

PY0612161788 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1600 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] La Paz, 6 Dec (EFE)—Colonel Juan Vega Llona, the Peruvian military attache in La Paz, was killed today at 0930 (1430 GMT) by a couple of youths who fled after shooting him.

The incident occurred in the Sopocachi residential neighborhood, a few meters from the Peruvian Embassy.

Police sources confirmed the killing, but they refused to give any further details. However, they added that details will be disclosed within a couple of hours.

EFE has been able to learn from sources close to the investigation that the perpetrators of the attack left a note on the body of the victim and it is signed by the self-styled "Revolutionary Labor Movement" [Movimiento Obreo Revolucionario].

For the time being, the Peruvian Embassy has not issued any communique and has refused to comment.

The body of the Peruvian military officer was removed from the scene of the incident by a court order and later taken to a funeral home.

Communique Issued

PY0612180488 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1740 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] La Paz, 6 Dec (AFP)—The police have reported that this morning Captain Juan Vega Llona, the Peruvian Embassy Naval Attache in La Paz, was killed in a downtown street. Police add that the Naval officer was killed by a man and a woman who shot Vega Llona at point-blank range.

According to the first official report on the incident, the diplomat died almost immediately due to the number of times he was shot.

In a brief communique, the Peruvian Embassy in La Paz states that Vega Llona was intercepted at the corners of 6 Agosto and Azpiazu Avenues. It adds that he died from injuries sustained from the shots fired at him by unidentified individuals.

The communique goes on to say that Vega Llona's remains are at the Bolivian Foreign Ministry building where the wake will take place.

The embassy refused to give any further details on the incident or about the victim.

MOR Claims Responsibility

PY0612180788 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1712 6 Dec 88

[Text] La Paz, 6 Dec (EFE)—The Revolutionary Labor Movement [Movimiento Obrero Revolucionario] (MOR) today claimed responsibility for the killing of Carlos Vega Llona, the Peruvian Embassy military attache. He was killed near his country's embassy in La Paz.

The MOR, an unknown group in Bolivia, has claimed responsibility for the killing through pamphlets scattered at the site where the Peruvian military attache was killed.

Rosario Marino, who witnessed the assassination and who is a City Hall employee said, "After three shots were heard, a white woman in her thirties, wearing a jacket and black trousers, came running down the steps on 6 August Street with a gun in her hand."

According to this witness, the woman who allegedly killed Vega Llona hid the weapon under her jacket and met with two other youngsters who spoke with a foreign accent. The witness added that "the two young people looked like Peruvians and spoke like Peruvians; when the woman approached them, one seized her by the arm and said let's get out of here." Then, "the three left, walking fast down Arce Avenue, parallel to 6 August Street, and one of them changed his jacket."

The military attache to the Venezuelan Embassy, Colonel Pablo Luis Figueroa, told EFE that the assailants are certainly professionals.

According to police sources, the body of Vega Llona had an entry bullet hole in the temple and the exit point at the back of his head. A second bullet was lodged in his chest.

The forensic doctor, who will perform an autopsy of the body in the next few hours, said that the Peruvian diplomat died instantly.

The Peruvian Embassy in La Paz has declared a state of emergency on its premises and announced that it will issue an official communique later today.

The Bolivian police have been mobilized to patrol the highways and the airport, official sources reported.

Chile

Colombia's Foreign Minister Begins Visit

PY0612131188 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 0930 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Colombian Foreign Minister Julio Londono Paredes arrived last night in Santiago on an official visit that will last until 11 December. Chilean Foreign Minister Hernan Felipe Errazuriz invited his Colombian counterpart to visit Chile. The Colombian foreign minister will meet with President Augusto Pinochet and Supreme Court Chief Justice Luis Maldonada. He will hold working sessions with Minister Errazuriz.

Minister Londono Paredes and his delegation will also visit the 12th region—Magallanes and Chilean Antarctica. They will stay in Punta Arenas, Teniente (Masch), and Villa Las Estrellas.

Londono Comments

PY0712015988 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Text] Colombian Foreign Minister Julio Londono Paredes today stated that his government views the Chilean democratization process with great satisfaction, and he noted that this process will make the people's will prevail.

Londono Paredes made these remarks today after meeting with his Chilean counterpart, Hernan Felipe Errazuriz, at the Foreign Ministry Red Hall.

[Begin Londono recording] As a friend of Chile, the Colombian Government views the Chilean democratization process with great satisfaction. That process will make the Chilean people's will prevail. The main thing for us is to see that the will of the majority of the Chilean people is now being respected. This fact is bringing satisfaction not only to the Chilean people, but also to all friends of Chile and to all Latin American countries. [end recording]

Commenting on Chilean-Colombian political agreements, Londono said there have been agreements between the two countries for many years. As an example, he cited the fact that they have vigorously defended the principles of nonintervention in the affairs of the other states, the inviolability of treaties, and the peaceful solution of controversies.

Londono said that while the superpowers are holding talks to promote nuclear and conventional disarmament, it is still easy to find illegal arms trading in some countries. He said these weapons will be used to build up the arsenal of those seeking to destabilize other countries.

Latest Figure on AIDS' Cases Released

PY0512183288 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 1 Dec 88 p C-6

[Summary] Dr Blanca Campos, head of the AIDS program, has reported that confirmed AIDS cases in Chile stand at 107 at this time. She further reported that the metropolitan area is the hardest hit, with 78.5 percent of cases.

Nine-Month Trade Balance Surplus Reported

PY0512183588 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 30 Nov 88 pp B- 1, 16

[Summary] The Central Bank of Chile has reported that this year's 9-month trade balance has registered a surplus $1,514,700,000. This surplus results from exports worth $4,992,000,000 minus imports worth $3,477,300,000.

Accumulated Inflation Rate 10.6 Percent

PY0512235688 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 2200 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Summary] The Consumer Price Index increased by 1.9 percent in November. As a result, the accumulated inflation rate this year totals 10.6 percent. This inflation rate is almost 50 percent lower than the 1987 rate.

Colombia

Government 'Pleased' With Venezuelan Election

PA0612191188 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Excerpts] The Colombian Government is pleased with the election of Carlos Andres Perez as president of Venezuela. President Virgilio Barco today spoke on the telephone with the Venezuelan president-elect. [passage omitted]

[Begin recording] [Colombian Foreign Minister Julio Londono] I believe there is a feeling of satisfaction not only in Colombia, but in the rest of Latin America because of the way the elections went in Venezuela. The democratic process in that country was consolidated by means of massive voting by registered voters. There are important ties linking Colombia and Venezuela. It is necessary for the two countries to act jointly and dynamically to advance toward common goals. [end recording] [passage omitted]

M-19 Warns 'Its Patience is Running Out'

PA0612011288 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2027 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Excerpts] Bogota, 6 Dec (EFE)—The M-19, which has maintained a cease-fire and advocates peace initiatives, today warned the Colombian Government that "its patience is running out" and that civil war will be unleashed if it receives no realistic proposals to negotiate peace.

Colombian President Virgilio Barco has repeatedly rejected the guerrilla organization's appeals for a dialogue, and he reasserted that "the peace plan" he proposed to the country on 1 September is still viable.

According to a document left in EFE's mailbox today, signed by M-19 Commander Carlos Pizarro Leon-Gomez, the guerrilla group states that "our patience is running out, and we are losing hope." Nevertheless, Pizarro asserts that the M-19 (leftist nationalist guerrilla organization) supports the peace plan proposed by Conservative Senator Alvaro Leyva Duran on 16 November. Pizarro hopes "the government will assume its responsibility concerning the many alternatives it has to reach a solution."

One of the key proposals in Leyva's initiative is the creation of a commission that will ascertain in 30 days if conditions exist for a direct dialogue between the Colombian Government and the guerrilla organization.

Pizarro also warns: "We write today, perhaps for the last time, a letter in the language of peace that encourages, from the soul, a generous word and an outstretched hand." [passage omitted]

President Barco today responded to the guerrilla proposals by stating that there is no alternative to the government's "peace plan," which was announced on 1 September. Barco told the guerrillas that their only hope is to lay down their weapons and join civilian life.

Barco today addressed Air Force members in Cali, in the country's southwest, and emphasized that the Armed Forces continue to fulfill their mission of defending the national institutions and struggling against subversion, as stated in the Constitution and the laws.

The president played down the peace offers made by persons outside of the government, indicating that experience has shown that the guerrilla groups resupply their forces and return to violence "after their rifles are temporarily silenced."

Barco said his "peace plan" remains as an "open door" for the guerrilla fighters who want to surrender and return to civilian life, respecting the country's democratic institutions.

Daily Notes Venezuelan Arms Buildup

PA0712014988 Bogota EL SIGLO in Spanish 1 Dec 88 pp 1, 2

[Unattributed article: "In Midst of Elections: Venezuela Ready for War"]

[Text] The arms race in Venezuela has reached truly alarming proportions for its neighbors. This alarm is the result of some recent contracts for military equipment signed by our neighbor. This equipment will be in addition to the equipment already purchased this year—also reported by EL SIGLO—at a cost of $1.099 billion, a sum that the Venezuelan Congress authorized for military expenses this year alone. On the eve of the Venezuelan elections, defense-related publications specializing in arms purchases recently reported two contracts for several million dollars signed between Brazilian and U.S. companies to acquire new equipment to reinforce the already impressive Venezuelan military arsenal.

Sophisticated Radar Equipment

According to WEEK [as published] magazine, the Sperry Marine firm has just signed a lucrative contract with the Venezuelan Navy to install an automatic navigational system—the Guardian Star—on the six frigates currently owned by the Venezuelan Government. The Guardian Star navigational equipment includes a highly sophisticated measurement system for electronic warfare similar to electronic radar. According to the contract, it will be installed in each one of the Lupo-type frigates currently owned by Venezuela.

In order to determine the significance of this modern equipment, we only have to know, first of all, that Colombia does not have a single frigate. What our country has are corvettes, one of which, as we may recall, had to retreat from Colombian territorial waters in the Coquibacoa Gulf last year when confronted by the Venezuelan threat in the already sad conflict of August 1987.

The new equipment purchased by the Venezuelan Navy will be delivered between 1989 and 1990 as part of an advanced modernization and arms buildup program in the Republic of Venezuela. In addition to the navigation equipment, the Venezuelan Government has also signed a contract with the Sperry Company to acquire a readjusting gyroscope [giroscopo reacondicionador], doppler speed controller [la adaptacion de registros de velocidad], and a GPS [not further identified] satellite navigation system. The Sperry Company will also deliver and install the well-known Oto Melare system in Venezuela.

The sophisticated Guardian Star system purchased by the Venezuelan Navy is designed for automatic detection, analysis, and jamming [despliegues] in an environment of multiple signals. The system identifies the emitting source, providing details on its exposure, frequency, shape, level of threat, size, and emitting platform. In other words, it gives the exact location and kind of ship or missile, thus permitting its immediate interception and destruction.

The military system that the Venezuelan Navy has just acquired includes audio-visual alarm systems based on programmed alarm levels. The Lupo-type Venezuelan frigates are currently equipped with a Lamda ESM [not further identified] system, which will be replaced with the sophisticated system ordered from Sperry.

More Air Support

The Venezuelan Government also signed a contract with the Brazilian firm Snecma to purchase 24 engines of the Atar 9K-50 type to modernize a few "old" aircraft in that country. The turbines will be installed in 12 Mirage 50 planes acquired by the Venezuelan Air Force and used to modernize 5 Mirage III-EV's, 3 single-engine Mirage 5V's, and 1 twin-engine Mirage 5DV, all of which are part of a 16-aircraft fleet (9 Mirage III EV's and 1 spare, 4 5V's, and 2 5DV's) acquired in the 70's. The modernization of this Mirage fleet is being negotiated with the Dassault and Thomson-CSF firms. This will enable the Venezuelan Air Force to extend the lifetime of the Mirage III and the capacity of the Mirage 50. The modernization of this fleet should be completed between 1990 and 1991.

Why is Venezuela Arming Itself?

This crazy arms race unleashed in Venezuela is inexplicable. Only this year, in addition to 80 Scorpio tanks purchased from the UK, Venezuela bought 200 Brazilian combat vehicles, tanker planes for air provisioning, missile boats to be used in the sea and rivers at the border, surface-to-air and air-to-air missiles, amphibian vehicles for transporting troops, etc. There is growing concern over this arms buildup, considering that the guerrilla phenomenon in Venezuela disappeared 15 years ago and therefore public order problems are unusual in that country.

Peru

Soviet Fish Industry Minister Arrives in Lima

PY0512144088 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0112 GMT 5 Dec 88

[Excerpt] Lima, 4 Dec (EFE)—Soviet Fish Industry Minister Nikolay Kotlyar arrived today in Lima, where he will sign a technical and economic cooperation agreement with the Peruvian Government on Tuesday, 6 December.

Peruvian Fishing Minister Romulo Leon, who welcomed the Soviet minister at the Lima airport, said that the agreement will go into effect on 1 January 1989. He added that the agreement comes within the framework of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. [passage omitted]

Economy Minister Comments on Obligation to IDB

PY0412023588 Lima Domestic Service in Spanish 1040 GMT 3 Dec 88

[Text] Economy and Finance Minister Carlos Rivas Davila has said that Peru is meeting its obligations to the IDB.

[Begin recording] [Rivas] Regarding the debt to the IDB, we had a payment deadline when I took over the ministry. The first thing we did was to give detailed information on Peruvian commitments to international organizations, to creditor banks, and to other entities.

We met our obligation before the news agencies reported the deadline. The information given by the news media may have shown Peru failing to meet its obligations to the IDB, but that information does not reflect the actual situation. Perhaps the news was released before we made a decision and because of the proximity of the payment deadline.

We were aware of this situation and we even talked with Cesar Atala, Peruvian ambassador to the United States, because we were concerned about the deadline. The country should know that we are meeting this commitment. This does not mean we have more money under the current circumstances; it means we can maintain normal and cordial relations with the IDB.

[Reporter] We would like to know what the real Peruvian reserves are, net or gross, because the president has one figure and the latest report of the National Reserve Bank has another.

[Rivas] According to the latest bulletin of the National Reserve Bank, the country's net reserves are $150 million, but the gross reserves are about $537 million, including gold reserves, [words indistinct], etc. I would like to point out that this figure represents an increase over the $524 million in gross reserves on 15 September 1988. The explanation for this increase is very simple. We have greatly reduced our imports and were thus able to keep a larger part of our export earnings. This is the explanation for the success we have had in meeting our most important commitments, within the limitations of our foreign reserves, in the current crisis. [end recording]

Law Merges Police Forces Into National Police

PY0712003388 Lima Television Peruana in Spanish 1800 GMT 6 Dec 88

[Excerpts] This morning Peruvian President Alan Garcia Perez promulgated a law creating the National Police. The ceremony was held at the Government Palace Hall of Honor. [video shows Peruvian police forces parading before President Alan Garcia]

[Begin Garcia recording] The promulgation of this law has exceptional characteristics. The first is that, by this law, the 1979 Constitution is amended. [passage omitted]

This amendment creates the Peruvian National Police. Each of the Peruvian police forces must feel proud for having played individual roles as institutions that are now uniting to make up the National Police. The Peruvian Civil Guards, the Peruvian Investigative Police, and the Peruvian Republican Guards—each has many things to feel proud of. Each has contributed greatly to the history of our fatherland. [passage omitted]

This National Police must fulfill the many objectives entrusted to each of the previous police organizations. This new police organization now has a principal objective. Your principal objective is to return tranquillity to the country and to ensure security by engaging in an all-out battle against subversion and terrorism.

You have seen officers and subordinate personnel die in the fulfillment of their duties. You also have institutional reasons, in addition to your legal obligations, to engage in a front-line battle against subversion and terrorism. I am certain that a better organization, a unified and coordinated National Police, will result in the eradication of subversion and terrorism.

Our society, the Peruvian society, regardless of its poverty, has to face a serious economic crisis, overpopulation, and other social problems, with a nationalistic spirit. This is necessary and possible. We cannot, however, allow this struggle to be conducted through violence and bloodshed. You, who by law and democracy are allowed to carry weapons, must use them to put an end to terrorism and subversion. [passage omitted]

We have confidence that the National Police, as well as our Armed Forces, will fight subversion and terrorism. There is no greater danger, no worse scourge, than subversion and terrorism. All other problems have a solution. They are at times difficult, but they can be solved. The economic crisis can be solved. The lack of political identity and harmony can be solved. However, we can no longer tolerate those who kill and who ideologically instigate others to walk on the path of bloodshed. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Venezuela

President-Elect Carlos Perez News Conference

PA0512192188 Caracas Venezolana de Television Canal 8 in Spanish 1616 GMT 5 Dec 88

[News conference by President-elect Carlos Andres Perez at Campo Alegre neighborhood, Caracas; moderated by Pepe Consuegra—live]

[Text] [Perez] Dear reporters, I am especially pleased to greet the international press corps who honored us with their presence at Venezuela's electoral process. Their presence led me to call this news conference that, as Armando Duran [not further identified] said, is especially for the reporters who came to Venezuela to cover yesterday's elections.

Of course, my dear friends, the national reporters who were with me throughout my weekly news conferences will have their chance. I am not going to deprive them of their turn, but I would like to give the foreign correspondents the priority in asking questions. You have the floor.

[Consuegra] Enrique Arauz, Spanish Television.

[Arauz] Mr President, congratulations on your victory. I take advantage of this first question as the first Spanish Television correspondent in Caracas to ask you [words indistinct] on one hand the electoral returns, and on the other hand if, as you repeatedly said throughout the electoral campaign, the reconciliation issue will be the leading theme of your government, or will the foreign debt be the leading issue? What will your strategy be in that sense? How will you respond to the situation? Thank you.

[Perez] I have not yet received the final results of yesterday's elections, but the situation has not changed. I believe my lead will fluctuate between 15 and 16 points, but I cannot yet provide a definitive answer. I am certain that the election results will be clearly established by this afternoon.

Reconciliation, as I said throughout the entire electoral process, will be the guideline of the next government, and since Venezuela's problems cannot wait, I began working today. I met this morning with a delegation from the board of directors of the Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Today at 1600 I will meet with the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers, giving priority to the preparation of reconciliation activities in the economic field. I hope that on my inauguration day, 2 February, I will be in a position to inform the Venezuelan people that my first reconciliation goals have been achieved. Reconciliation in my government, however, will go beyond economic issues, because if we do not build the framework for various aspects of national development, we will not achieve the goals we have established.

Among other things, I am greatly interested in achieving reconciliation with Venezuela's universities and in encouraging and strengthening research. Research is essential to a country about to compete on a large scale in the international export market. The cultural field should also play an important role, especially since we are about to present new plans for international tourism. We should, therefore, strengthen our national identity.

As for our foreign debt, this is a delicate subject and, undoubtedly, one that merits priority attention in initiating any serious short- or mid-term planning program. Our country cannot continue in the present situation: Of the approximately $7 billion that entered the country in 1988, $5.6 billion has been used to pay foreign debt interest and capital amortization. It is impossible for a nation, much less a developing country, to assign almost 70 percent of its export income to foreign debt servicing. We do not have any plans, however, to confront the creditor countries. It is essential to open dialogue, but one where we are heard, our reasons are understood, and our willingness to reach an agreement are emphasized. I also continue to believe that only through Latin American unity will we be able to confidently start on the road to new agreements that will address the foreign debt problem. This will be another activity that will occupy my time, because it is one of my main concerns. I have already talked on the telephone with some presidents who are my friends, and I have expressed my desire to confront these problems as soon as possible. Thus, I will not rest. I have already started to work prior to the 1st day of the difficult presidential period that awaits me. I want to govern with very clear goals that will create trust in all of the country's sectors.

[Consuegra] The following reporter is (Christian Boffil) from Sao Paolo.

[(Boffil)] My question was on foreign debt, and it has already been covered. Thank you.

[Perez] As a matter of fact, President Sarney called me last night, but I was not able to answer his call. I will do so today and tell him that the Brazilian reporter's concern was about foreign debt. [laughter]

[Consuegra] (Alan Ready) from THE NEW YORK TIMES.

[(Ready)] Mr President, good afternoon. Some months ago you participated in a diplomatic effort to resolve the political situation in Panama. These efforts were not successful at that time. I would like to know if you, as president-elect or as president after 2 February, will initiate new efforts to resolve this continuing problem?

[Perez] I firmly believe we must all become interested and actively participate in the solution of problems affecting Latin America. The situation in Panama is a difficult one. I say it is a serious problem for the future of Latin American democracy. We must unite efforts to find a solution that will guarantee the Panamanian democratization process, naturally, by the Panamanians—a solution that will overcome the serious conflicts that have appeared in U.S.-Panamanian relations. There is no doubt that Panama is a country that interests us, not only for unescapable solidarity reasons, but because it was the center of a great Latin American victory—the victory of the Torrijos-Carter treaties that returned the canal's sovereignty to Panama. The third reason—and this could also be the main one—is that Panama owns this canal that is vital for maritime traffic. Therefore, Panama's problems are of world interest. I will help in any way I can to reach a definite resolution of the Panamanian problem, open the gates for resolution of the political controversy in the electoral process, and ensure that next year's elections in Panama paves a serious path to democratization. I will do anything I can, while always remembering it is a Panamanian problem—although we Latin Americans have something to say about it. We must further a solution that will be satisfactory to all.

[Consuegra] Andres Openheimer, of THE MIAMI HERALD.

[Openheimer] Good morning, Mr President. Do you plan to normalize relations with Cuba, and is it true that you think the policy of isolating Cuba from the Latin American community has not been effective and that Cuba should be reinstalled in the OAS?

[Perez] Our position is, of course, to maintain relations with all countries of the world. It was during my past administration that relations with Cuba were reinitiated. Also, I was the one who, as interior minister during Romulo Bethancourt's administration, faced the domestic subversion that existed at that time and that was being openly supported by the Fidel Castro regime.

We believe, however, that political pluralism is a must in our Latin America, and Cuba is in our continent, in the Caribbean. To the extent that Cuba honors international commitments, responsibilities, and duties, all of our countries will benefit. The isolationist measures that were taken in the past are no longer appropriate. We tried to include Cuba when we created SELA. Cuba is a member of this Latin American organization. For example, I cannot imagine trying to reach an agreement on drugs, trying to face such a huge and important problem in the Western Hemisphere, while excluding Cuba. I favor normalizing relations with that Caribbean country regardless of insurmountable ideologic differences—and there is no possibility at all of reaching an understanding in the ideology field since they have joined the communist world.

[Consuegra] You have another question? Go ahead.

[Openheimer] I would like to pursue my first question a bit further, if I may. Regarding bilateral relations between Venezuela and Cuba, will they be normalized?

[Perez] As you have said, we are talking about bilateral relations, so this is a question Venezuela cannot answer alone; it must be answered by the two countries. This is a matter we will have to study and resolve, because relations with Cuba are not broken.

[Consuegra] Are you through? Pilino Apureyo Mendoza of Bogota's EL TIEMPO.

[Mendoza] Mr President, I am going to ask you for your comment on a certain issue. I am asking you this on behalf of not only EL TIEMPO but of all Colombian journalists here. In your end-of-campaign speech, you made a statement that caused some unrest in Colombia. If I am not mistaken you said: Venezuela is not prepared to yield an inch of its gulf, its sea, or its territory. This part of your speech was interpreted in Colombia as saying negotiations on this subject would be very difficult. I would appreciate a comment on this. We know your policy is in favor of negotiations, of regional integration, and of friendship with our country. What plans do you have to improve relations between our two countries? Thank you.

[Perez] It is very regrettable that a subject such as the controversy over the gulf's maritime limits was brought up the way it was in the political campaign. I really wish it had not happened. Unfortunately, the subject was brought up. I believe a key concern of most Venezuelans was that situation. A Venezuelan who was not involved in the political debates, a great Venezuelan, Arturo Uslar Pietri [well-known writer], strongly criticized this situation in a television statement. My clear position was not to get involved in this issue. I did so because of a strict sense of Venezuelan and Latin American responsibility. In my last speech, though, I had to discuss this issue and, of course, I did so. I do not have to take back a single word. My government is not only prepared to defend every inch of the gulf that belongs to us, it is also prepared to struggle and to make efforts so that Colombia recognizes Venezuela's rights in the gulf. This categorical statement of mine at no time denied or ignored the fact that there is a controversy we must solve—the sooner the better. I also have said that we do not know how far from or how close to a solution we are. The situation is a source of concern for all, not only for you in Colombia, my friend Pilino. There is also concern in Venezuela, and I am going to start making efforts among important political circles to formulate a national position to facilitate a continuation of the negotiations in which we are engaged, whether we like it or not, with Colombia.

Everyone knows I have a very firm integrationist mind. I know there can be no solution to our problems if Latin America does not strengthen this integration. It would be absurd to think of integration when there are differences between Latin American countries. On the other hand, the Venezuelan people have always said the gulf is vital for our country. We are also aware that there is a Colombian presence in the gulf.

Regarding initiatives: Our two countries must help remove this problem from the official arena and make our people aware of the need to find solutions, bilateral solutions, to the problem. I have always said that involving a third party in this matter would only mean that tomorrow we would have a winner and a loser. This is not good for Colombia or Venezuela. We have not run out of efforts to find a solution by means of an agreement between the two countries. Like I said in my message to Congress during my previous term in office, Venezuela and Colombia cannot find solutions to the problems without the support of the people. I will do all I can to normalize relations with Colombia. Pilino knows our relations have always been good. I will try to clear away the uncertainty created by the fact that this issue was brought up during the campaign.

[Consuegra] Francisco Tulande, RCN [Radio Cadena Nacional], Colombia.

[Tulande] Good afternoon. I would like you to be more specific regarding your last answer. When you talk about consultation, does this mean you are willing to hold a plebiscite in Venezuela to determine the people's views regarding the demarcation of the maritime and underwater areas? My other question is: What are you going to do about the border situation? That area has problems with repression, drug traffickers, guerrillas, and paramilitary groups—this after the El Amparo massacre.

[Perez] I think a plebiscite is held to determine whether a treaty should be signed or not. Such a step is not included in our Constitution; our Constitution speaks of

consultations with the people. This is good and necessary. No government should end such a negotiation without having the support and approval of the people. The border problem is a difficult and traditionally mishandled problem. I was very clear on this matter during my speeches at the border, in San Cristobal, San Antonio Urena, and in El Amparo. I think we are going to have to work hard to create relations that I am sure will be very fruitful for Venezuela and Colombia. As long as we refuse to broach the border issue within the framework of an integrationist agreement aimed at developing both sides of the border, we will not find a real solution to existing problems.

However, we also have other serious problems at the border: the guerrillas and drug traffickers. We could say these two problems did not enter Colombia from Venezuela, they came from Colombia. I am not trying to find excuses, I am just telling the truth. Without the help of the Venezuelan and Colombian Governments, we cannot properly confront this situation.

What happened in El Amparo—an incident that caused so much grief, anguish, and uncertainty in our country; it is the people who suffer the consequences since Venezuelan citizens were the victims in this incident—is currently under investigation. I do not think too many days will pass without the incident being clarified. But the real problem is the dramatic situation in that area. Too many Venezuelan National Guardsmen and soldiers have been killed in ambushes set by Colombian rebels. This tension can unleash incidents like the one we saw in El Amparo. The only way to solve this problem is through good understanding and good agreements between the Venezuelan and Colombian Governments. It is necessary that our relations be good enough so we can combine operations along the border in order to guarantee calm in an area that is experiencing upheaval due to drug traffickers and guerrillas.

[Consuegra] Next is Jose Comas, EL PAIS, Madrid.

[Perez, interrupting] By the way, it is important that I mention that I won every single voting table in El Amparo. I was the only winner in El Amparo.

[Consuegra] Jose Comas of the Madrid newspaper EL PAIS.

[Comas] With your victory yesterday, Mr President, it seems as if you broke the unwritten rule in Venezuelan politics since 1968, which is that the main parties alternate in power. Did your victory mark the beginning of Venezuelan politics' Mexicanization? Also, do you support transferring the OAS to Caracas?

[Perez] I would ask you if the Spanish Government has become Mexicanized because Felipe Gonzalez was elected twice. [Perez laughs] The alternation of power may be a respectable principle, but the decision of who will govern a country is made by the people, the electorate, during the elections. To prohibit reelection, therefore, is senseless in countries where democracy is properly exercised, as in Venezuela.

Regarding the OAS, I do not believe Washington is a bad location. What I believe is that the OAS structure should be reviewed, because it was created within a doctrine and under an assumption which are irreconcilable with reality. The hemisphere is not a region. There are two regions in the hemisphere: the Latin American region, which is located south of the Rio Grande or Bravo, and the region north of the Rio Grande. The OAS, therefore, should be a forum where Latin Americans can sit down together opposite the United States to discuss their problems and their differences, try to reduce them, and establish possible means of cooperation and exchange. This is what seems important to me, more so than the issue of the OAS' location.

[Consuegra] Following is our friend Pedro Pablo Camargo of Mexico's EXCELSIOR.

[Camargo] Mr President, a very special greeting from EXCELSIOR's director Regino Diaz Redondo and your friend (Juca Julius), who works with us now. I have two questions for you. First, what sort of relations with Mexico will you follow? I believe you maintained an active relationship with President Luis Echeverria. Second, does your criticism today of Fidel Castro's government mean your government will identify with the U.S. capitalist bloc?

[Perez] My friend Camargo, I am very pleased to have representatives here from newspapers as important as the ones that have already participated in this news conference. I believe EXCELSIOR is Mexico's best newspaper, and I read it often because it offers a good view of what is happening in that important Latin American country.

I do not understand why you said I have criticized Fidel Castro. I have not criticized him. I said that his is a communist regime in Latin America and that I am a friend and supporter of political and ideological pluralism. Regarding global politics, of course, my position is very clear. I am in the Atlantic; I am with the Western world; I favor and support democratic positions. I do not hesitate to say that my side, my trench, is with the United States. This in no way, however, mortgages Venezuela's independence or its right to its own policies. This is how I implemented foreign policy in my past government, and it is how democratic governments in Venezuela—all the governments from 1958 until now—have implemented their foreign policies. It is a position I will maintain.

Regarding relations with Mexico, I believe there should be mutually beneficial relations between the Mexican and Venezuelan Governments; the two countries should make relations as close as possible. We are now faced

with a challenge. Over there in the southern cone, Brazil and Argentina spearheaded a new movement to reactivate the process of Latin American integration, which has been badly abused during the eighties. Perhaps Mexico and Venezuela, over here in the northern part of South America, should begin a process similar to the one started by Brazil and Argentina to see if we can unite Latin America from one end to the other in an integration pact.

I am optimistic over the talks I held with President Salinas de Gortari regarding large-scale plans for trade, rapprochement, and cooperation with Latin America and between our own countries, which Mexico and Venezuela should begin to implement.

[Consuegra] William Long from THE LOS ANGELES TIMES.

[Long] Mr President, to complete our biographic information, I have two questions. I read here in Caracas that you completed a masters degree in Washington. I would like to know when you received your degree and from which university. Second, there is old criticism that your term as interior minister was marked by strong repression and violation of human rights; it is even said that prisoners were thrown out of helicopters. How do you reply to that criticism?

[Perez] Regarding the first part: Unfortunately the political struggle did not permit me to complete my academic career, but I do have strong ties with U.S. universities and have lectured at several of them, especially Harvard. I would like to complete a masters in Washington to see how we can better understand the United States.

Regarding my term as interior minister, I am happy to say that it helped me earn the wide popularity I enjoy in Venezuela. It was a very difficult time because we had half the congress against us in the struggle against subversion. I have been our history's most questioned cabinet minister.

Nevertheless, I faced all my responsibilities, and those who opposed me violently at that time later expressed their affection and respect for me in various forms. I investigated all suspicious incidents, and when I was interior minister there was never any accusation that someone had been thrown out of a helicopter. I never allowed the Armed Forces to carry out operations without the presence of the Interior Ministry's police. Therefore, I could always say that I was responsible for what was happening.

Unquestionably there were incidents of abuse during the open war we faced, and there was even repression against some persons during that administration. This was never hidden; it was investigated, and when a person was found guilty of such abuse, he wound up in jail. Perhaps what satisfies me most is that those who opposed me and who were guerrillas yesterday are today personal friends of mine.

[Consuegra] Paul Knox from [name indistinct] of Canada.

[Knox] I would like to ask two questions. The first is how you believe OPEC can strengthen itself right now, and if you have any ideas for a new policy toward the independent producers. The second concerns things that have occurred in the last few months in the Armed Forces and that I have heard during my time in Venezuela. There is talk of dissatisfaction in the Armed Forces over the effects of the economic situation on the soldiers' families. What specific plans or steps can you take to confront the discontent in the Armed Forces, among both the troops and the officers?

[Perez] Regarding OPEC, I can say with much satisfaction that we have already started to reunify OPEC with the agreement that was just signed in Vienna. I am optimistic and confident that this will go deeper. I am going to Kuwait in a few days and will have the opportunity to talk with the leaders of that country.

I will probably also hold talks with other leaders of Arabian Gulf OPEC members to make this reunification more complete. I hope to convince all the OPEC members that we need another meeting like the one we had in 1975 in Algeria, where the leaders of the OPEC countries agreed on the organization's principles and goals, which served as a guide until this year but which must now be restructured into a new pact at the highest level.

We have seen a very interesting phenomenon in this oil crisis. It is the first rapprochement between OPEC members and the independent oil-producing countries. For instance, Norway and Mexico have played an important role in this rapprochement. I believe it is OPEC's obligation to try to strengthen this in the future.

I say to my friend Mr Knox that many things are said during elections. Controversial topics are exaggerated and situations that have been surmounted in our country are debated as if they still existed. However, an event did occur and we cannot deny it. For whatever reason, there was an incursion of armored vehicles in the streets of Caracas when the president was away. This incident caused all sorts of justified commentaries about what could be happening within the Armed Forces. I have, however, noted in this same news conference that the incident only proved the Armed Forces' institutional stability and their respect and solidarity with the democratic system. The incident did not provoke any sort of upheaval in any military installations. There were no reports that whatever happened in that armored vehicle battalion had any connection with the rest of the Venezuelan Armed Forces. The incident only proved the strength of our system and institutionality of the Armed Forces.

Regarding economic matters, my friends, not only are uniformed Venezuelans unhappy, we are all unhappy. We are experiencing a very difficult situation. Our currency's purchasing power has decreased dramatically and the distortion between wages and prices is serious. This is one of the great challenges my government will have to face. That is why, as I have already said, I started talking with businessmen and workers today.

The Armed Forces also feel the effects of the economic situation. However, democracy has greatly improved the economic conditions of the Armed Forces. A social security law for the Armed Forces was approved during my administration, providing them with many benefits. The Armed Forces agree that the democratic government's laws have helped them. Nevertheless, I agree that there are some problems that must be resolved soon. The purchase of housing by Armed Forces officers is one of these problems. Regarding the rank and file, Venezuela has an 18-month military service and the troops' income has also improved. The democratic government takes great care in giving Venezuelans in the military service adequate nourishment and an acceptable amount of comfort. I can assure the foreign newsmen that, fortunately, there is a pretty stable democracy in Venezuela and the Armed Forces play an important role in the country, but within constitutional guidelines. Today the Venezuelan soldier is totally integrated into the national community, and we see uniformed men in the universities, in social meetings in all the country's sectors, and having relations with all political sectors. After 30 years of democracy, this is one of our greatest achievements. [2-minute station break]

[Reporter, in progress] ...to allow time for leadership?

[Perez] During the campaign, this idea was brought up very cunningly—that I wanted to name a prime minister to enable me to go on foreign trips. I believe the presidential system is in a crisis, the same way the classic parliamentary system is. In the United States, this crisis has resulted in Congress taking over too many prerogatives that belong to the President—even in the administrative field. This has harmed the United States.

The problem is even worse in Latin America, because centralizing social conflicts in one person alone—the president—is maybe one of the destabilizing factors in our democratic system. It might be good to look into—to study first before making any decision—the advantages of creating the post of prime minister, not in the parliamentary but in the executive branch. The idea is that there could be a chief executive who would be different from the head of state, who would still be the president, and the president would still hold on to the basic power. We often see the case of a president who does not have an administrative role, yet the country's administration rests on him. Many times a president cannot make the changes he should because he might lose prestige. I therefore share the idea that the problem should be studied, and I will do this during my term. This change would require a constitutional amendment, and even if I agreed to this, this would serve the next administration, not mine.

I do believe that paying attention to international politics is important. If we have a say in important international decisions, we will be safeguarding our future. It is abroad—I repeat this constantly—where it is decided what is sold to us and what is bought from us, at what prices things are sold to us and at what price they are purchased. It is abroad where it is decided how technology transfers are made.

This means we must participate more and more actively in international politics. I followed an active foreign policy during my administration, and I will continue to do so.

I will work hard to increase links between Latin American countries and to strengthen all the integration plans we have taken part in up to now.

Leadership cannot be decreed nor is it the sole decision of any one person. What I can say is that I will participate in all events that may be of interest to our Latin America and in all international events that are to mankind's interest.

[Consuegra] (Anita Coulson) of the BBC.

[(Coulson)] First of all, my congratulations to the president-elect. I would like to know—since a few days ago you talked about neoliberalism and said you did not like it—if you have already rejected the idea of adopting an economic policy such as the one adopted in my country and Spain, which has had very good results in stabilizing the economy in West Europe.

[Perez] Well, I believe it would be silly on our part to discuss labels. The neoliberal theory is an economic theory like any other, with positive and negative aspects. So what is being sold to us as neoliberalism simply says that it does not matter if there is unemployment and hunger, as what really matters is economic growth in the country, whether it favors the majority of the nation or not. That is why I reject the neoliberal theories that have poisoned our countries.

Furthermore, I believe it is not the same to implement an economic policy in Europe, where there is real social security, where there is insurance against strikes and unemployment, and implementing a policy in Latin America, where workers do not have the same advantages and unemployment represents hunger and total poverty. Therefore, we cannot compare what developed countries can do to what can be done in our nations. The neoliberal theory is not what can help us move ahead; nevertheless, we cannot reject many of Friedman's good ideas.

[Consuegra] We will close this news conference with our colleagues who came here to cover yesterday's events with Michael Red, of THE GUARDIAN of London.

[Red] You have repeatedly mentioned your interest in promoting Latin American integration to handle the foreign debt problem. What do you think is the most suitable institutional forum to make progress in this regard: the Group of Eight—now seven—in its current form, or should this group be expanded to include other countries, or should it be a revised OAS, as you mentioned before, or another forum as SELA, for example?

[Perez] I believe this great initiative that began in Acapulco should be strengthened, and that right now it would be the best forum to outline a concerted policy regarding the foreign debt problem. SELA is an organization of extraordinary importance because it comprises all the Latin American countries and, as its name says, it represents the Latin American economic system. However, I believe that at this time SELA has weakened a great deal, as all of Latin America's multinational organizations have during this decade. Hence, I believe the Group of Eight should be the forum we should use at this time to carry out these integration plans.

In addition, the Group of Eight is made up of the leading countries, in the demographic and economic sense. Of course, this does not mean SELA, as an organization that includes all Latin American countries, cannot be a complementary organization to analyze the problems related to the foreign debt. However, right now I feel the Group of Eight is the organization that can help us more practically and with more chance of success to outline a united policy; Latin America's largest debtors are in that group.

[Consuegra] Although I had announced the end of the news conference, we will now hear a question from (Idaka Hinoaki) of the KYODO agency of Japan.

[(Hinoaki)] I have two questions. My first question is: Do you have any plans to meet with Bush to discuss the Nicaraguan situation? My second question is: What will be your policy in your relations with Asian and African countries? Thank you.

[Perez] It is very important for any Latin American leader to have a direct relationship with the U.S. President. Of course, it would be very significant for me to begin this relationship with the new U.S. President as soon as possible. In addition, I must say that the Latin American experience has taught us that, notwithstanding the great importance of our relations with the United States, we must broaden our foreign relations, particularly in the economic field. We should expand our relations with the EEC and Japan. This will help us strengthen our positions and will increase our negotiating power.

Regarding our relations with Asian and African countries, we have a very clear position on our policy toward the Third World. This term is not fully understood, and apparently it is being forgotten now in this world of bilateralism in which we have fallen as a result of the crisis. We seem to have forgotten that we are part of a developing world that is quite different and diverse in all aspects, but with similar problems that make our alliance and understanding a very important factor.

Thanks to that Third World, the United Nations approved the Declaration of Economic Duties and Rights of States. This was an extraordinary step forward on which I based my decision to nationalize our oil.

Thanks to the Third World, the developing countries formed the Group of 77 at the United Nations, which has allowed us to cope with common problems and face the large industrialized countries. Therefore, from this viewpoint, I feel that relations with the Asian and African countries are very important. From the political point of view, relations with nations such as Japan and China are also part of this new policy of expansion that the Latin American countries are following.

[Consuegra] For my colleagues who are participating in this news conference, I want to point out to you that the president-elect is accompanied on the podium by Doctors Humberto Celli, undersecretary general of Democratic Action [AD]; (Antonio Ledezma), executive secretary of the central office of the president-elect; Alejandro Izaguirre, secretary general of AD, the government party; David Morales Bello, campaign manager and member of the AD National Executive Committee; Armando Duran, media director; (Pastor Jaidra), executive media director; and Enrique Tejera Paris, AD secretary for international relations. Thank you for your attention. We now continue with Venezuelan journalists. First question by Ramon Hernandez of EL UNIVERSAL.

[Hernandez] Mr President, you have said that you bear no grudges and that this will be a government based on a nationwide agreement. What role will Eduardo Fernandez [defeated COPEI presidential candidate] play in this agreement? My second question is as follows: Once we have a president-elect, speculation begins. It is already being said that you will bring up for discussion such economic issues as an increase in gasoline prices and indirect taxes and improving some services, such as electricity. Is there any basis for this speculation?

[Perez] The first thing I note is that Ramon Hernandez is more hoarse that I am, and he did not run in the campaign. He only accompanied me. [laughter]

As for the agreement, all political parties represented in the National Congress are included, and this—of course—includes COPEI. There are no exclusions, because then there would not be any agreement. On the other hand, we must not forget that despite our commitment to signing a pact among all political parties, we

must continue the institutional reforms that the people liked so much during the campaign. We cannot abandon them now. The presidential commission is committed to preparing the working papers on which we will base the signing of this pact.

I told the presidential commission about the need for it to submit the report to see if we can quickly give Venezuelans that pact among political parties as a Christmas present. Regarding the problem of prices and the economy in general, it is very premature to say what we will do. No doubt the steps taken will stem from the agreement we have already talked about. Therefore, I cannot give a specific answer regarding an increase in the price of gasoline, electricity, etc.

[Consuegra] Alfredo Alvarez, from EL NACIONAL.

[Alvarez] Good morning, Mr President. I have two questions. The first is really an idea that came to me at the end of the campaign—I was one of the people who was honored to accompany you throughout the campaign—it is as follows: The recent elections in which Venezuelans participated have served to absolutely confirm the people's trust in the candidates they vote for. You take office for the second time, with great support. The prediction by your campaign staff is that you will win in every state. This result shows the people who voted for you totally trusted you. Do you think that based on the country's current situation, our economic situation, and political future, you will be able to meet all the expectations of the Venezuelans who voted for you yesterday?

Second, all newsmen are asking: Who will you govern with? With the same people you did in 1973? Or with new people in 1988?

[Perez] [Perez laughs] I will appoint a new cabinet. [laughter, applause] Well, no doubt there are all sorts of expectations regarding my next administration. In fact, many cabinets have been named for me. The most important expectations deal with the improvement that the people want, long for, and seek in their living standard. To think I can meet all expectations would be impossible. However, this is my challenge: to draft a policy in which every sector feels we are heading in the right direction, and we can feel certain the desired improvement will gradually occur.

We must immediately deal with two fields. One is the social field. We must face, at any cost, the problem of underprivileged people and critical poverty with emergency solutions, specifically with subsidies. However, we must take emergency measures, as I said, not final measures. We must begin to draft macroeconomic policies that will gradually lead us to a selective expansion of our economy and also to a full employment. We must urgently face the problem of poverty. This problem even involves the country's tranquility.

Later, we must gradually meet the expectations of the fifth sector [quintos sectores] of society; that is, the problem of the middle class. In Venezuela, we have a dangerous descent of the middle class into poverty. No doubt this situation is very serious for the country. The middle class is a very important factor in the growth of the nation. This is another problem we must face. Our policy of agreement will help face it.

There is also the housing problem. In Venezuela, building homes for the middle class is totally paralyzed due to the high cost of land, as well as because of the paralyzation of the mortgage banking system and the national savings and loan system. This situation must change quickly. The Congress already has a bill on a housing policy. I am committed to its enactment in the first session of Congress. This bill will open the possibility of having a home.

Later, we are going to return to FONDUR [National Urban Development Fund] and the purpose for which it was created in my past government. It was a land bank that helps to balance the price of land in the country. We are going to negotiate with IAN [National Agrarian Institute] for the land that was originally allocated for land reform and which is now in Venezuela's major cities and many other regions in the country. This land can be used for urban development. We are also going to study with the military the possibility of exchanging the land occupied by their installations in major cities and building them... [Perez changes thought] That way, we will create a major fund to modernize the Venezuelan Armed Forces. In the short term, we would use that land to increase the amount of housing. That is, we will develop many plans in this respect that will meet the basic expectations of the middle class.

The problem of wages and salaries is very delicate. As we already know, a policy on the matter drafted without very clear guidelines is counterproductive and causes dangerous jumps in inflation. There will have to be an important agreement on this matter. I was discussing it this morning with representatives of FEDECAMARAS [Venezuelan Federation of Associations of Chambers of Commerce and Industry].

Let us now talk about those who will work with me. Venezuela has changed very much. The Venezuela of 1988 is a very different Venezuela from the one I led. Venezuela has made positive changes.

The Gran Mariscal de Ayacucho Scholarship Program and the opening of many universities and technical institutes developed a new society that must now occupy the position it deserves. We are at the threshold of that magic date of the beginning of humanity's third millenium, and we must transfer responsibilities to the new generations of Venezuelans. I will keep in mind all those ideas when I select and appoint the new government officials. You belong to those new Venezuelan generations, in fact. [Perez laughs]

[Consuegra] Leon Perez from ULTIMAS NOTICIAS.

[Leon Perez] President Perez, on behalf of the Venezuelan newsmen present here, including Diana Ramon, our dear friend Argelia, and myself—because I did not have a chance to see you yesterday—I would like to congratulate you. I have a number of questions here, but I will only ask two or three of them.

First, in view of the current Venezuelan crisis and in view of your willingness to solve it, will you ask the National Congress to grant you special powers, as you did during your first government when we had our oil boom? Will the current situation demand more resolute decisions from you and your party? Last night, it was said that you will have much more freedom within AD now because of the election results. It seems there are groups very close to AD that would like you to govern far from AD.

Second, there is a new phenomenon, Mr President. Rafael Caldera [former Venezuelan president] was talking about it last night. I am talking about the problem of abstentionism, which had never been a major problem for Venezuelans. We think abstentionism was very high in these elections. Caldera estimated that approximately 2 million people did not vote, and others estimated there was a 27-percent abstention rate. That means there are very many people who do not believe in AD, COPEI, the other parties, or in the system itself.

Third and last, we insist on asking about your cabinet. Diana Ramon said something very interesting. She said that as much as we want to find out about candidates and as much as we want to vote, we also want to know a few names from your cabinet. Why don't you give us a few names as is done in the United States?

[Perez, laughing] Is that all? Regarding the National Congress and the special powers, I can tell you that the Constitution authorizes the president to request those special powers. That request, however, cannot be the result of a whim. As a result of our discussions, we will decide whether it is suitable to request those powers for the president as the head of the council of ministers. For the time being, I would say I have no reason to think that is necessary. We will see.

In addition, it is good to recall that each and every one of the measures taken by my government to issue various laws are still valid. That means they were accepted. The country needed those measures, and they were timely. The haste with which they were taken made it necessary to resort to the special powers. That is how we created the Investment Fund of Venezuela, the Agricultural Development Fund, the Industrial Development Fund, Corpoindustria, and so on. Actions will speak. There must be some reason for the Constitution to grant special powers to the president.

Regarding increasing freedom for the president within his party, I can say AD has never been a straitjacket for its presidents. There is no reason to think that the situation will change during this administration. On the contrary, there is more experience concerning party-government relations. That will let us improve those relations. There are no problems between AD and President Carlos Andres Perez, and there will not be any in the future.

Concerning abstentionism, I would like to say that Leon Perez has reached hasty conclusions, because they imply that the United States does not believe in democracy since only half of its population votes in the U.S. presidential elections. In other words, the norm in the democratic world is usually a 25- to 30-percent abstention rate. In Venezuela, on the contrary, we have a massive turnout. I believe in the last elections we had a 17-percent abstention rate, and I believe in these elections we will not have more than a 20-percent abstention rate. We can consider Venezuela as one of the privileged countries in that respect compared to other democratic countries. I do not believe people are tired or sick of our system. If you stayed up late last night, you must have seen people partying in Caracas following the election results.

Regarding cabinet names, I must say our friend Leon Perez is very curious. I respect his curiosity, but he will have to wait a little bit. [Perez laughs]

[Leon Perez] Mr President, Argelia Laya insists on asking a question about [Perez laughs; several people speaking and laughing at the same time] the institutional pact. You already said it is possible that the pact will not be fulfilled during this presidential term. How do you see that pact? Your lesson was an earthquake for COPEI. Pedro Pablo Aguilar [not further identified] said this morning that COPEI went back 20 years in these elections. COPEI had lost many senatorial seats in several states and many more deputies. Other congressional forces, however, were strengthened. What do you think is the future of the institutional pact in Congress?

[Perez] At this time, we will go beyond the institutional pact. This time it will be an agreement; there will be a pact among all political parties for the reform. Let us not stay in the past. Let us look to the future, Leon Perez.

[Consuegra] We now continue with our friends, the foreign correspondents accredited in Venezuela. The first question by Petr Poldenkov of Soviet television.

[Poldenkov] Good afternoon, Mr President. I am a correspondent of Soviet radio and television. Currently, there is a new concept in the international vocabulary, and that is a new political mentality. What do you think about this, and how will this new concept affect Latin America, and particularly relations between the Latin American countries and the USSR?

[Perez] I think this is a very important question. The reforms begun by Gorbachev in the USSR have had a very positive impact on Latin America. Perestroyka and glasnost are very common terms in our countries. I believe we must also carry out perestroyka and glasnost in our country. Therefore, what is happening in the USSR today will have very important repercussions throughout the world. We are also hoping for improved U.S.-USSR relations, because in that way we can also see that the basic problems of mankind will be handled better. This will decrease the arms race, which consumes great resources of the superpowers, and, to a large degree, we, the developing countries, are paying for it.

[Consuegra] (Carrie Feddon) of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

[(Feddon)] Good afternoon, Mr President. I have two questions. Yesterday, an economic adviser said on television that he thought your first economic measure should be eliminating the current exchange system and replacing it with a floating rate. I would like to know if you are in favor of this policy.

Second, concerning OPEC, you said... [changes thought] actually, Venezuela is already part of the long-term strategy committee. What will Venezuela do within that organization?

[Perez] Undoubtedly, one of the most important economic decisions my administration must make from the very beginning deals with exchange unification. There are several opinions on that issue. One calls for floating our currency. However, that is such a delicate issue that we will not be able to make any decision until after we have carefully weighed all the alternatives for exchange unification. Therefore, it is not unusual for one of my economic advisers to voice an opinion to this effect, but without discussing it with others who have opinions on other ideas. This is one of the decisions that has not been reached yet. However, it is definite that we are heading toward exchange unification and eliminating the multi-exchange system that has caused us so much harm.

As for OPEC, we are currently undergoing the new adjustment process of the unity of OPEC, and this strategy commission will be extremely important in coordinating the new actions toward the unity of action that is taking place wihin OPEC. Right now, I could not give any specific news on what we will propose at that strategy commission.

[Consuegra] Now, Harold Olmos of ASSOCIATED PRESS.

[Olmos] Mr President, I would like for you to clarify some points concerning the necessary agreement you will try to promote within the Group of Eight on the foreign debt issue. I am asking this question because within the Group of Eight there are differences on how to view the foreign debt issue. There are different stands. In this case, are you in favor of longer terms, fixed interest rates, or fixed payment? Also, will you invite Fidel Castro to your inauguration?

[Perez] Concerning the first question, the truth is there are no differences within the Group of Eight concerning how to deal with the debt. There are some different views that can be coordinated. The proof of that is that so far, the proposals made at the Group of Eight have many of the same objectives. This is not a matter of having joint negotiations on the foreign debt. What matters is for us to agree on a framework for negotiation within which each country would later unilaterally negotiate with its creditors.

Secondly, I think the need to agree on and revitalize our negotiation power is being more and more considered in our countries. No Latin American country—not Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, nor Venezuela—reached satisfactory agreements. Every day we sink more and more in the difficulties caused by the foreign debt.

At the Harvard meetings, which were so important for renegotiating the foreign debt in the immediate future, the foreign debt negotiators—Brazil, for example, which has had the largest [renegotiation] so far—gave a far-reaching explanation. They agreed that it was merely to buy time. In no way did it resolve any of Brazil's fundamental problems. Therefore, we are seeing a growing awareness to jointly face the foreign debt problem. What was the other question?

Oh, yes! Well, I have not decided on what the invitations will be. However, I have a policy of not being biased at all regarding Latin American countries. Therefore, I could not announce any decision on that matter. That is something that is to be studied. It could be either yes or no. It depends on many things.

[Consuegra] (Richard Bauer) of the Swiss News Agency is next.

[(Bauer)] Mr President, my question deals with exchange rates. It is known that some Swiss companies are helping your country's current government control and oversee imports. Do you think that in the future Venezuela's foreign trade system will undergo substantial changes? Will the same system be maintained? Do you think foreign trade will be expanded?

[Perez] Yes, there will be substantial changes. We must make a very clear opening to exports. This is one of the major reasons behind the agreement with the private sector. Exports must receive very strong incentives from the government. Government interference in this field must be reduced as much as possible. As for the companies overseeing imports, their results and costs are a matter that is to be studied. I would not dare to make a hasty decision. Regarding the presence of Swiss and

other foreign companies in our country, we are also going to strongly promote the presence of foreign companies and foreign investment in Venezuela.

[Consuegra] We are going to conclude this final cycle of questions with our friend Ted Cordoba. Before he speaks, I want to remind my colleagues that in 20 or 30 minutes you will have the full transcript of this news conference in good Spanish, for everyone. With your permission, Mr President-elect, I want to thank everybody for their cooperation. I want to apologize for my reprimands and bad temper with the journalists here. [applause] Here is Ted Cordoba.

[Cordoba] Mr President, I sense you have a specific interest in summoning a meeting of the OPEC heads of state. I think you mentioned something to that effect. However, your comments are different now that you are a president-elect. That would be one question. My second question is: There is evidence that the military uprising in Argentina was led by a person who received logistical support from military men in Panama. This situation confirms that military men from any country are always ready to help each other against constitutional governments. Now that you assume an important position in the Group of Eight, what is the civilian presidents' defense against this? What measures can be adopted to deal with future officers like Mohamed Seineldin?

[Perez] I have said before that I am interested in a review of the Algiers Pact. It will be very important for OPEC to hold a new summit. However, this matter is not solely within my purview. This matter will depend on an agreement that will be reached within OPEC. However, I think it is very important. I think the biggest stumbling block is that the Iran-Iraq agreement has not been finalized yet. This is another topic that should command great interest for the sake of world peace and OPEC's own interests.

Regarding this adventurous officer, I want to say that fortunately there are fewer and fewer officers in some Latin American armies who think it is still possible to replace the people's will and sovereignty with acts of violence. I understand this man was out of Argentina. What?

[Unidentified person] He was a military attache.

[Perez] A military attache. I understand he was not a trustworthy person for the democratic system. I do not know whether or not there was really aid from the Panamanian military. His plan was not to transport or purchase weapons; instead he was counting on an uprising of Argentine military units. No, I do not think this development—aid from other countries' military men—is that important. I think the specter of military men helping each other overthrow governments has faded permanently from Latin America.

As for the crux of the matter, I am glad you mentioned the situation in Argentina. It is good for foreign newsmen, especially European and Asian newsmen, to note the highest solidarity there was from all the Latin American governments with the government of Raul Alfonsin. The very straightforward, clear declarations by all Latin American presidents must have been a great help in controlling the new uprising against the Argentine Government. We must consider this development as very important and positive for the future of democracy in our region.

[Consuegra] We have concluded the news conference as was scheduled. We now have food and refreshments for you.

Electoral Council Reports Final Election Results

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[Text] Caracas, 6 Dec (EFE)—The victory of Social Democratic candidate Carlos Andres Perez and his Democratic Action (AD) Party in the presidential elections held in Venezuela on Sunday was confirmed by the final official count issued by the Supreme Electoral Council (CSE) today.

According to the final count, 9.1 million people voted, half of the country's population. The abstention figure was 20 per cent, the highest in Venezuela's electoral history. It is almost double the 1983 figure.

The percentages and votes received by the candidates were as follows:

Presidential Election	Number of Votes	Percentage
Carlos Andres Perez (AD)	3,884,202	54.56
Eduardo Fernandez (COPEI)	2,971,677	41.74
Teodoro Petkoff (MAS-MIR) [Movement Toward Socialism and Movement of the Revolutionary Left]	193,975	2.72

A list of another 20 candidates with less than 1 percent follows.

Legislative Election	Number of Votes	Percentage
AD	3,056,454	43.76
COPEI	2,195,118	31.43
MAS	717,350	10.27
New Democratic Generation	232,834	3.33

A list of another 32 parties and groups with insignificant percentage figures follows.